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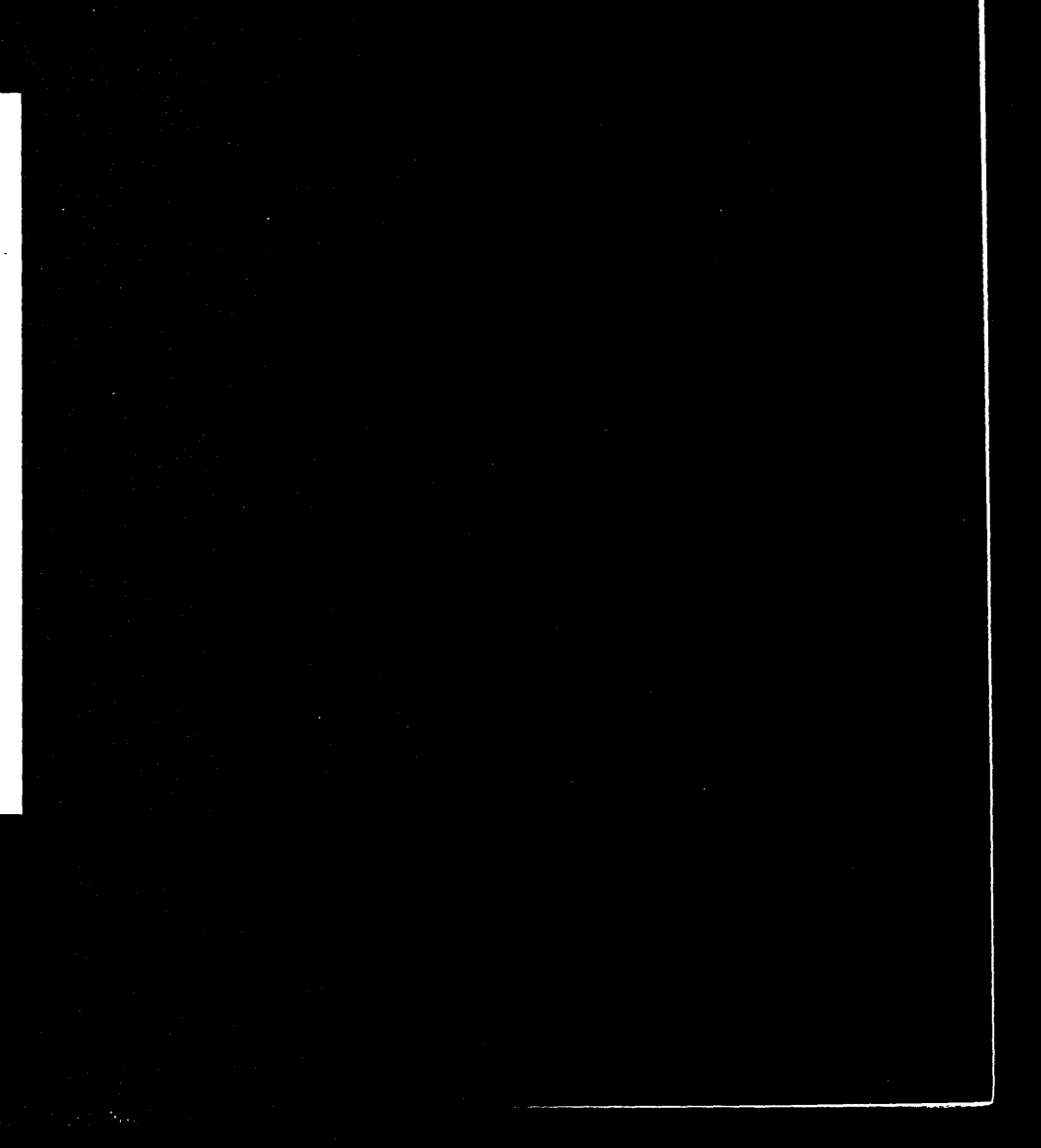




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The Gospel in Action

By the
Right Rev.
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Lord Bishop of London

Milwaukee, Wis.
The Young Churchman Co.

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P r e f a c e

THE chief evidence for Christianity is the power of the "Gospel in action." Men may argue as they like about Christianity, but, so long as it remains the power of God unto salvation, so long as it changes wills, converts souls, comforts hearts, and brings peace to distracted minds, it carries with it its own evidence, which nothing can refute.

The sermons which form this volume have their sole interest in the fact that they formed part of the "Gospel in action" during 1905. The work of a Bishop is essentially mission work. Whether he opens a new church, institutes a new vicar, addresses large gatherings of men, inaugurates a Church Congress, or carries on what

Preface

is more specially called a "mission," he is always carrying out, or should be seeking to carry out, his Divine commission as the Chief Pastor and Head Missioner of his diocese—"Be to the flock of CHRIST a shepherd, not a wolf; feed them, devour them not. Hold up the weak; heal the sick; bind up the broken; bring again the outcasts; seek the lost" (Order for the Consecration of a Bishop). He has little time for preparation, and has to preach his sermons almost always extempore, and therefore there must often be, except in those which are written, a lack of finish and often a roughness of style; but, still, there ought to be a directness of address and a personal touch, derived from the fact that, unlike the parish priest, he knows that, at any rate during the year, he will never have an opportunity of addressing those particular souls again.

It is these considerations which have made me yield to the desire of many to have some reproduction of the sermons of the last year in a permanent form.

Preface

The first seven sermons must only be regarded as a "memory" of the West End mission in Lent, 1905. They were the *first* sermons of each course, which was continued through each week in the same church in which the first was preached. Thus each sermon here printed was followed by one or two more in the same church, which are not printed here.

Of the rest, "Faith as a Grain of Mustard Seed" was preached to the undergraduates at Oxford, and was taken down in substance correctly. Those who read it will be surprised at the sensation it appears to have made, and will be even indignant that a warning given in the course of it with the affectionate directness which I have always used for years at both Universities, and which is never misunderstood by the undergraduates themselves, was distorted by the Press into an attack upon the University, which I honour and love, and have done my best to serve for years.

May the simple words recorded in this volume

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bring back impressions known to have been made upon at least some at the time when they were spoken, and be looked upon as a voice proclaiming, however inadequately, the everlasting Gospel, the power of which is only fully seen in its action upon the characters and lives of men.

A. F. LONDON.

Ash Wednesday, 1906.

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The West End Mission

I

B

I

THE PASSING OF JESUS OF NAZARETH *

“And a certain blind man sat by the wayside begging : and hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. And they told him that JESUS of Nazareth passeth by.”—
ST. LUKE xviii. 35.

“THEY told him that JESUS of Nazareth passeth by !” It is quite possible that to some it will seem almost a work of supererogation to observe a special season at all, and still more so at such a season to make a special mission effort throughout West London. “Is not JESUS CHRIST” —even a true Christian, though, as I hold, mistakenly, might say — “the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever? May I not pray to Him, speak to Him when I like? What is the use and what is the object of a special mission?”

Now, such an argument, plausible in itself, fails to take account of two things : First of all, the steady work ever going on in the West End of London, undermining faith, sapping character, and

* Preached in Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Street, Ash Wednesday, 1905.

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pressing upon souls. I speak what I know. Some young man picks up a magazine article in the club. He had not had enough education to answer it, and what he reads there begins to sap, to undermine his faith. A girl, confirmed, brought up to be good, and meaning to be religious, comes across, over and over again, some sceptical friend, and her faith goes down like a pack of cards in a moment.

And this is going on all round us. I say nothing of the East End. I speak of the West End. I have learned to know it better than I did ; and there is a slow, sure agency sapping the faith of hundreds in this end of London. Side by side with that there is the slow but sure undermining of the character which comes from softness, and luxury, and comfort. It is extraordinary how, almost imperceptibly, a life of comfort, mere comfort, gradually lowers the ideal. Some young soul starts on its Confirmation day full of a high ideal of what life means, and looks like that beautiful picture by Mr. Watts, called "Aspiration" ; and a few years ago would have read, with a glow of hope and resolution, the motto beneath it, "Fear not, for all may have, if they dare try, a glorious life or grave" ; only a few years pass, and what is this glorious life spent in? Bridge in the afternoon, again after tea, again sometimes in the evening ! The comforts of life gradually seem to close round the avenues of the soul, and the mere life of comfort lowers those glorious ideals. We see it every day.

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And then, side by side with this, is the steady drift of an only half-Christianised public opinion. Of course, if life was really being in a boat, and floating gently with the stream, it would be a different thing. But everyone knows, who has seen life on a large scale at all, that it is like rowing your very hardest against a tremendous stream ever pressing against you, and that to stop, to relax your efforts to the slightest extent, is to drift down; and there are thousands of lives, thousands of our boys and girls, thousands of our grown-up men and women, who have drifted, and are drifting year by year. Therefore, the first answer to the objection, honestly raised, about special efforts is that unless special efforts are made souls drift away from God.

Then, turning to the other side, the objector forgets the splendid promises in the New Testament when he asks why we believe in missions, or why we believe in special efforts, or how we justify, for instance, one who knows only too well that he has more work to do than he can do having the temerity to take on a special work in Lent? The question comes to be whether the New Testament is true or not. The HOLY SPIRIT has promised to do this work : to take of CHRIST and show Him to us. That is the special work of the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD. The HOLY SPIRIT is promised to us in answer to our prayers, and with a special outpouring in answer to our united prayer.

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“When two or three agree in praying, it shall be done for them of My Father, which is in Heaven.”

And when we put these two things together, and remember that hundreds and thousands are praying for a special outpouring of the HOLY SPIRIT to bring JESUS CHRIST with Him to the West End of London, then we find ourselves face to face with this: Do we believe GOD or not? I ask you Christian men and women who feel faithless about it to go down upon your knees and pray for us. It is in answer to the united prayers of thousands of believing people that the HOLY SPIRIT does come down, and so a special Presence of JESUS CHRIST is vouchsafed in a place. In Bethnal Green a few weeks ago it was marvellous to see what JESUS CHRIST did. The LORD was working with them there, and confirming the word with signs following. And look at Wales! Although the Celtic nature is doubtless appealed to in a very different way from that in which the West End of London can be appealed to, yet who can deny that when a judge finds seventeen hundred less charges for crime in one county in a year—who can deny that there has been an outpouring of the HOLY SPIRIT, and that JESUS CHRIST has been in the place?

Therefore it is that I take as the motto of the mission for the whole of Lent this cry, which echoes back the blind man's question, “What is the meaning of this multitude that passes by?” and they told him—“JESUS of Nazareth passeth by.”

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And I hold it to be a literal truth, an absolutely literal truth, as much so as if we saw Him with our own eyes passing through West London. In the power of the HOLY SPIRIT He will pass by this way ; and it is the most vital question of our lives, How shall we receive Him ? When we face the question, and put ourselves in imagination as a crowd assembled to see Him pass through some town in Palestine of old, the first thing that we should have in our hearts, if we had really been told that this great Prophet, Teacher, Lover of Souls, was to pass through our midst, would have been expectant faith. And here, at once, out of this great crowd, I do not doubt that some will sadly say, "That is just what we have not got. If we had our brothers' or our sisters' faith, if we had the faith of one who preaches from the pulpit in the church we attend, we should be ready, but it is expectant faith which we have not got."

Let such a one, then, take hold of this as his first conviction in this Mission. The first thing that I believe to be literally true is that JESUS CHRIST can take away doubt. He will not do it in a moment. The doubt may last, as it did for some of us, for months and even years. But, paradox as it may seem, you want faith to get faith ; you must have expectant faith if He is to say, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" and you are to answer, "LORD ! that I may receive my sight," and

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have it given back to you. I can only say that this is a paradox which has shown itself to be true.

There are some of us who know that JESUS CHRIST took away our doubts Himself because we were not flippant about them, and hated them, and longed for light, and prayed for light, and were ready for light, and stayed with the Church in our doubt, like Thomas. We know that it was no special argument, but it was CHRIST Himself who gave us sight, and that whereas we were blind, now we see. And I rejoice that the first word of the mission should be to the doubters. I do sympathise, with all my heart, with that young man struggling with his doubt, or with that poor girl who has lost her faith, and perhaps does not dare to tell anyone about it; and if we sympathise, CHRIST sympathises much more, and nothing in the world would He love to do more, as the first thing, than to say to that poor blind soul, unwillingly blind, "Receive thy sight, thy faith hath saved thee."

And if this is so, put away all flippancy about it. Do not have the misery of a girl I once knew, an elder sister, who told her doubt to her younger sister, and then afterwards, when her own doubt was removed, found her younger sister always a sceptic. Do not talk about your doubts except to those who can help you. Stay with the Church. St. Thomas did. There is no reason to give up all your old religious observances. Then you will find

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that strange contradiction true of you. Your faith will save you.

Right is better than wrong ; we know that in the worst times of doubt. JESUS CHRIST is the ideal of the world ; we know that. Live up to what light you have got, and pray for more, and JESUS CHRIST will take away your doubt.

The first note, therefore, of the preparation of this great multitude for the passing of JESUS CHRIST ought to be that of expectant faith. A great missionary once began his mission by kneeling down and saying, "O God, I thank Thee for all that Thou art about to do through this mission." He believed in God, that He would not fail His word.

And if the first thing which we should all have in waiting for JESUS CHRIST to come through our town is expectant faith, then, surely, the second ought to be reverent awe. I believe, in regard to the West End of London, that it is in reverence that we fail so to-day. You find reverence failing in the family life ; you find reverence failing in regularity of worship ; you find it failing in the neglect of prayers, in the things that are being said and done, which people could not say or do if they believed JESUS CHRIST was watching them. And therefore I do plead, in the second place, for reverent awe. It is so easy, even if one is a little bit impressed by what is said in a sermon, or by a great service, to go out and talk it away,

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flippantly criticise this or that, and let the seed which has been so carefully planted by no human hand be stolen away by the Devil. It happens over and over again because there is no reverence. So do let us have, not only expectant faith, but also reverence. Let us go out in the morning for at least one more Holy Communion in the week ; get up in the morning at least a quarter of an hour earlier during the days of Lent, to have more time to go down on our knees with the Bible, or to read some devotional book, and while we do it, say, "I will hearken what the LORD GOD will say concerning me." "I will hearken what He has to say in this quiet time while He is passing." "He will have a message for me." "I will hearken what the Blessed LORD has to say concerning me." And you may be perfectly certain that He will speak.

And then, thirdly, as an outcome of the reverent awe and expectant faith, there is almost certain to be a penitence that is no make-believe. When was it that St. Peter said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O LORD"? It is most striking to see when it was. It was when he was aware of the Presence of JESUS CHRIST close to him. I will never believe that any one of us can be made penitent for our sins, or even see them, except in the Presence of GOD. It is not denunciations about punishment which convict us of sin. It is the HOLY SPIRIT bringing the peerless ideal before

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our eyes, seeing what we might have been in the power of that ideal, and then seeing what we are. We often get help by the passing of some good person. I have in my mind at this moment the passing of a very good, pure-minded, and holy Eton boy. And what was the result of his passing? It was discovered afterwards that his presence, his example, had influenced numbers who never would have suspected for a moment that they would have been influenced by him. He passed through them, lived his life among them, and now numbers can look back and say, "Because of him I kept straight."

Now, it is in the presence of the good that we feel ourselves sinful; and therefore, as I will myself, I ask you also during Lent to try and picture the closeness and nearness of One who was holy, harmless, undefiled, as you will find beautifully drawn out in a little book called "In Watchings Often,"* which I recommend to you for Lent. Holy, harmless, undefiled—in that pure Presence let us look at our own lives. Are we allowing ourselves in any way, which we try and excuse as innocent, any flaw upon our purity of heart? Can we face the all-seeing eye of God each moment of our lives? In the Presence of the pure, holy, harmless, and undefiled let us look at ourselves and our influence over others—in the Presence of Him who said: "MY FATHER

* By Canon Holmes.

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worketh even up to now, and I work." "Work, work while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work." Let us ask how we spend our lives.

Look at your lives. "Who is the better for your being alive?" That is the question to ask upon your knees. Who, if you died, would look back and say, "Because of that person's influence I am a different person from what I was, from what I have been"? Every soul ought to be able to say, as CHRIST said Himself: "To this end was I born; for this cause came I into the world, to bear witness to the truth." How much witness have you borne? In the presence of perfect forgiveness—"FATHER, forgive them, for they know not what they do"—look at your life. What about your quarrels? What about the spite that you have against someone to-day? What about that unkind feeling? Who is spoiling the family life at home? In the presence of that perfect love, look at your own life. I do believe that if we all, in the presence of that perfect love, examine ourselves, we shall say, with St. Peter: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O LORD." He will not depart. But the conviction of sin, and the bringing home of what we are in the sight of GOD, is the first beginning of a new life.

Look again at the blind man for a fourth lesson—the resolute determination to avail himself of the passing of JESUS CHRIST. There is something splendid about it. They try to hold him back; they

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said he was not wanted. They reproach him for saying, "JESUS, Master, have mercy on me." But with a moral earnestness, which is the example of the world for all time, he would ask the one Person whom he believed could help him for the thing that he needed. And he was rewarded.

It is impossible to know what each of you most need. One may need purity of character, another may need moral strength to go to church when no one else in the house goes. Another may need considerateness and gentleness at home, another the power to forgive a great injury, another patience to bear a long sickness, another to bear a terrible home-trial which is almost wearing you out, another the gift of service, another guidance in a complex state of things ; but this I do know, that in JESUS CHRIST is the thing you want. It is not a mere phrase when we say, "There is no other name under heaven whereby we shall be saved": it is a literal truth. His help is inexhaustible, accessible, and immediately available to every soul. Therefore, if you have not that special gift that you need, it is because you have not got moral earnestness to thrust aside the foolish people who would hold you back, and say: "I will have from JESUS CHRIST, who passeth by, the things that my soul needs."

And while we do it, do not forget what, please God, we should have done of old : we should

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have brought out the lame, and halt, and blind with us. We could not stand in the street and see Him pass by, and know there was some poor girl in a garret who wanted to get to Him, and leave her there. So it is that it is so appropriate that by our alms, by our prayers, we should bring out, for instance, those friendless girls* whose lives are so tempted. We should bring them in touch with JESUS CHRIST, that as He passes by He may help them too. Mary Magdalene was down in the mud of the streets, but JESUS CHRIST passed by ; and now she is robed in white, and for ever gleams and glitters, a jewel in the crown of the King of kings.

“JESUS CHRIST passeth by.” With expectant faith, with reverent awe, with humble penitence, with moral earnestness, let us greet Him ; and God grant that when He passes by there may be some who say, “Whereas I was blind, now I see” ; and that, as in Samaria, when He passed through of old, there may be great joy in this city.

* The collection was for the Rescue of Friendless Girls.

II

TRUE LIFE *

"To me to live is CHRIST."—PHIL. i. 21.

THE motto for the whole of our West End Mission is "JESUS of Nazareth passeth by"; and it is felt that the HOLY SPIRIT is inspiring that message. We have just tried to see, with the eye of faith, the blind receiving their sight and the leper being cleansed. I will not enlarge upon that, but I would say earnestly, Do not forget, you doubters, that CHRIST can take away all doubt—all, men, women, boys, girls, can have their doubts cleared away during the Mission. When we look over our country to-day, is it not extraordinary that, without any conscious co-operation, the idea not being suggested from one to another, but being inspired by the SPIRIT of GOD, there should have been the revival in Wales simultaneously with the many mission efforts here? It is no mere sentiment which can account for the diminution of crime as a result of it; it is not

* Preached in St. Paul's, Onslow Square, on the first Sunday in Lent, 1905.

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mere sentiment which is inspiring other efforts ; it is not mere sentiment which inspires the Mission in the West End of London. No ; then what does it mean ? It must mean this, that JESUS of Nazareth wants to pass by us in a special way, and we may believe, though we cannot see Him, that He is passing through our midst.

Now let us consider together the case of a man whom JESUS of Nazareth passed by of old, and comforted. It is all the more striking because He did not pass by him when He could be seen with eyes on this earth ; He passed by, and the man could only see Him with the eyes of faith, as we have to see Him. Let us see how we are to understand what he says.

St. Paul said, "To me to live is CHRIST." I believe that to many, even Christians, that motto seems an exaggeration to the point of unreality ; the words are looked upon as being those, almost, of a fanatic ; at any rate, far too high for mortal men. I want, first, to demonstrate to the conscience of every living soul that this motto, "To me to live is CHRIST," is absolutely true in every field of life that we can take.

Take, first, the field of the world's sorrow. One morning two boys were announced to see me. They were two boys left fatherless that very morning. Now, I asked myself—as I have often asked myself on similar occasions—what have I got to say to these two boys ? When I was a

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young man I had to study Plato and Aristotle ; I had to read the history of philosophy. Was there anything I could remember in what I had learnt in Plato or Aristotle that I could have had the face to repeat to those fatherless boys in the morning ? There was nothing—nothing that would have been of the slightest comfort to them. But if it is true that some One stood, as He passed by through the world, and said, “ In My FATHER’S house are many mansions : if it were not so, I would have told you ” ; if He demonstrated that that was true by breaking the bonds of death like so much tow, and rising again Himself ; if the spirit of the dear father of those boys which left the body that morning was not lost, but gone before, and is still joined to those poor boys he loved so well ; if there is some One who still holds that family together with His loving arms, and if some day, in the happy future, they will all see each other again, and be together with God for ever—then, believing all that, I could put my arms on the shoulders of those boys and kneel down with them and pray for comfort for them, because there was a motto I could repeat to them on that morning of sorrow ; and that motto was, “ To me to live is CHRIST.” And when you think that in this city of ours someone dies every eight minutes, day and night, and when you think of the anxiety before each death, of the sorrow over the death-bed, and the blank in the home afterwards ; when you think of

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what you yourselves have gone through, then I claim this as the first point in my argument: that on this great field of sorrow that covers so large a part of life, this impracticable, this exaggerated motto, as the world thinks, is the only one that is of the least comfort—"To me to live is CHRIST."

And then, secondly, though sorrow is bad enough, it is nothing to sin. Would not any father, any mother, who understands life, rather see their son dead in his coffin than dead in trespasses and sins? Those of you who have seen your son dead in his coffin know how mysteriously God has comforted you, so that even in the saddest day in your life there was the "peace that passeth all understanding"—there was no bitterness. But have you ever heard the agonising cry of a penitent soul? The cries of two such souls are ringing in my ears at this moment: "It is against God I have sinned—against God!" So there arises this second question: What reason have I to believe and assert that "To me to live is CHRIST" is true in the field of the world's sin? I will tell you. Try to comfort and bring peace to a stricken soul, to which the great realities of the New Testament have at last come home, and I defy you to find any sight which comforts the soul in the agony of repentance except the sight of the Cross. There may be some of you who are unrepentant—some who still go to church at times, in whom the old instinct has not quite died out, but who know

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perfectly well that they are chained by habits which they cannot break of themselves. They want life; where are they to get life? "To me to live is CHRIST." What am I to do to be saved? "Believe on the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and thou shalt be saved." What you ought to do is to get alone as soon as you can, and look into your life. Death comes quickly sometimes—comes in a moment; and remember that God "will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained." Then, taking the standard by which you will be judged after death, ask the HOLY SPIRIT to show you where you have broken His commandments; go down on your knees before the Cross, and ask for pardon; make a full and frank confession. Peace will come at last; it is a free gift; but the blot, the stain, must be washed away first, and then, on the broken, contrite soul will come the peace of God which passes all understanding. Therefore, on the field of human sin, it is literally true that "to me to live is CHRIST."

And then I take another field—that field which no eye but God's ever sees, the secret life of the individual soul, never revealed to any other living soul on earth—the secret life in which a man or a woman's soul struggles with temptation. Some young man struggles against a habit, perhaps for years, almost in despair, but keeping up a brave face before the world. He asks God for help, for

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no one except GOD has known of his terrible condition. Now, what is the hope for those who are struggling with temptation, struggling to get the better of temper or of degrading thoughts which drag them down? I know of nothing except the life of CHRIST within us. "JESUS, help me; have mercy."

I remember a poor girl saying to me: "I come to the mission, but when I go back to the factory I find it impossible to keep my temper." "Well," I said, "try one thing—try saying, 'JESUS, help me.' " Four days after she came and said: "It is wonderful what that does; I have not lost my temper since." What did that mean? That as she said, "JESUS, help me," under her breath, there was poured into her weak, tempted soul the whole power of JESUS CHRIST. I claim that on this third field of the temptations of the world—the secret struggle that every soul has against sin—"To me to live is CHRIST."

Then, again, try one other field. A man will say—a man full of the work of the world—"Yes, this is all very well, but how does this motto of yours help me in my business life, or in my political life, in my busy, worried life in public affairs?" My reply is: "I do know this is the motto you want; it is the motto we want in politics, the motto we want for those who look after public affairs; it is the motto for a business man to write up over his desk, "For me to live is

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CHRIST." If every politician made that his motto, what a different thing politics would be! If in the City this was written over every business house, what a different place the City would be! And when a man came back from the City—I know often how weary and worried—he would, if he had taken that motto every day, trying to advance what was righteous, just, and true, assuredly find peace in his heart and soul.

Or take society, with its often weary round of pleasures, which become half duties, half pleasures, what is to keep society pure? There is no wrong—who can say it?—in the rich meeting together at certain times in the year, entertaining one another, having social intercourse; but what is to keep that intercourse pure and clean? What is to prevent amusement driving out everything else? I know of one thing only—one thing only in the world—and that is to hear Jesus say, "The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment"; or, "For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Therefore, in society, what we want to press home to the conscience of each member is, "To me to live is CHRIST."

How, then, was it that when St. Paul was taught this he was so far from believing it at the beginning that he scoffed at the idea that it should be his motto? He was just like some man in our London to-day, who, with no thought of religion,

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living for self, would scoff at the idea that he would ever say, "To me to live is CHRIST." Hear the voice of JESUS of Nazareth as He passes by : "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" Kneel down for a few moments, and realise that, perhaps in a way of which you have been half conscious, you have been persecuting JESUS. There may be someone in the place where you live or work whose life you make a burden by your conduct or speech. You are persecuting JESUS CHRIST through them. It may be someone over whom your influence is very great; and perhaps it is because of you that they learn bad ways or neglect their church—you are persecuting JESUS. "Inasmuch as ye do it to the least of these My children, ye do it unto Me." If by a frivolous life precious time is wasted, if a life with endless possibilities for good has nothing to show at the end of the year, then you are persecuting JESUS CHRIST.

Kneel down and say, "LORD, what wilt Thou have me to do?" "He loved me, and gave Himself for me." And in time the conviction of sin will come. Then take up the Cross, and say, "I am crucified with CHRIST." St. Paul laid his old, selfish, self-indulgent nature at the foot of the Cross; and that is what he meant when he said, "I am crucified with CHRIST"; "I live, yet not I, but CHRIST liveth in me." "To me to live is CHRIST."

III

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD*

“Again spake Jesus unto them, saying, I am the Light of the world : he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”—ST. JOHN viii. 12.

“JESUS of Nazareth passeth by.” Let us repeat the motto and the message of our mission in the West End of London ; and thank God for His infinite mercy that He has shown signs He is personally passing by. We have, as I have said, seen the blind receive their sight and the leper cleansed ; and there have been many signs that CHRIST has spoken over and over again His healing word, and that the LORD has been working with us, confirming the Word with signs following. And now let us take some of the cries that Jesus of Nazareth uttered as He passed by ; and the one we take to-night is, in some senses, the fullest, the gladdest of them all : “I am the Light of the world : he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” No

* Preached in Christ Church, Lancaster Gate, on the second Sunday in Lent, 1905.

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wonder that that saying has caught the imagination of the world, and no wonder that painter after painter has tried to portray what the light of the world is.

We have all seen the famous picture called "The Light of the World," or some representation of it, and no doubt it is beautiful. You remember it—the kingly figure with the lantern knocking at the closed door, and the closed door, not only closed, but covered over with brambles which had grown over it because it had not been opened for years. I can imagine quite easily someone whom that picture exactly represents, who has not prayed for years, at whose door, as it were, CHRIST has knocked and knocked, bringing the lantern with Him, the Light of the world, in His hand—and is still knocking.* If I pass away from that picture and say it is inadequate for the great saying, it is not because it does not accurately represent one feature and one possibility of the Light of the world.

Or, supposing we see the Light of the world as the historian Schaff showed the young Church of JESUS, going into the darkness like a beautiful star. It is a beautiful and true idea: "I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star." It is true enough; but the star does not light up enough the darkness of the world; it is inadequate, because with the darkness of London and the clouds hanging over, not only place after place, but soul after soul, even so beautiful a picture does

* See Sermon IV.

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not represent what JESUS meant when He said, "I am the Light of the world." No, I believe that Nature interprets best, as so often, this great saying. When I have stood, not once or twice, after climbing to the top of some snow mountain, and watched the sun come up above the horizon, first gilding this peak, then that, with the prevenient rays of coming dawn, then the whole panorama blushing with the dawn; and then, with great leaps—only those who have seen it can understand with what leaps—up comes the great giant of the universe. As we look down on the clouds thick in the valley and see the stream still frozen on the glaciers, we seem to hear the Sun call down to the dark slumbering earth, "I am the Light of the world; awake, thou that sleepest, arise from the dead, and I will give thee light." And as we see him do it—as we see the sunshine pour down, warming the earth; as we see the frozen glacier stream flow again under the Sun's warm rays; as we see the clouds, first brightened, then gradually melted into thin mist, then the colour come back to the earth, then the signs down in the bottom of the valley of life returning, of man coming out to work, and the animals beginning to feed—then we have something like an adequate picture of what JESUS CHRIST meant when He said, "I am the Light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

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And that picture is so appropriate, in the first place, because of those prevenient rays of dawn. You know there are many people who imagine even to-day that when we speak with pride of our religion we mean to say there is not a ray of goodness in anybody else's religion in the world. Just as it is only the ignorant and the shallow who imagine that one religion is as good as another, so it is only those who do not understand what we mean by the Christian religion who can think for a moment that there is no good in what Confucius taught China, what Buddha spoke of in India—nay, what there is to-day in some of those religions in the world which at any rate cast one or two rays of light upon the darkness of the world. No ; what we who believe in the Sun of righteousness say is, that these were the prevenient rays of the coming dawn. We rejoice in them. What Plato and Aristotle said to the Gentile world, what prophet after prophet spoke to the Jewish world, what those teachers in the Eastern world taught, were all rays from the one light. There is only one Light and only one religion in the world—this coming sun, which was to rise in all its glory at last in the fulness of time upon the darkness of the world ; there was only one sun, and the light you saw before was the light from that sun. Therefore, let every thinking man or woman put away the idea that to be a Christian you have to be a narrow-minded person.

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And, again, that picture is so true, because, as I look down on London, it is exactly the sight that I see which I used to see from the snow mountains—I see clouds. There are clouds that come over every household—the cloud of sorrow brooding over that home where the dear one has been taken away; the cloud of sin, unrecognised sometimes, unforgiven and even undispelled; the cloud of mystery—where do we come from? where are we going? why are we here?—the cloud of doubt, often a terrible distress, especially to young souls who are passing through it; then the deadness of the world until CHRIST has arisen upon the soul; the colour gone out of life, no streams of penitence, no streams of grace, no loving, happy, bright and beautiful life. Therefore, I deal to-night with no fancy picture.

You hardly realise, I believe, some of you, how completely we touch, as it were, JESUS and His story and His history. It, after all, does not require such great faith as some of you imagine. Christianity is a *historical fact*. That JESUS lived is a matter of Roman history. What does Tacitus say? “JESUS CHRIST was put to death when Pontius Pilate was Procurator of Judea.” In a perfectly unbroken succession the Holy Communion has been celebrated ever since that day as a historical fact, quite apart from the meaning of the service. It is like a phonograph—you can hear the actual voice of JESUS CHRIST historically in it. Nobody doubts for a moment that the Holy Communion

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has never ceased being celebrated from that day to this. Recently I sent out twenty young men from St. Paul's Cathedral one morning after the ordination. It is a historical fact that they were the end of a long row of men who have been sent out from the Apostles' days to our time. Whatever value you may attribute to it, it is a historical fact that it is so, and for two thousand years there has been the testimony of millions—one or two might be mistaken, but millions cannot be mistaken—that this living Person, this historical character of two thousand years ago, has been alive in the world during these two thousand years. If you want to sum up in a sentence what He has done, you would say that He has proved to be the Light of the world. Take the historian Lecky—I am talking rather now to those who are doubtful and sceptical and find it hard to believe these things—what does he say as he looks over Europe for two thousand years? “The record of those three years has done more to regenerate mankind than all the plans of statesmen and all the disquisitions of philosophers.” They are the words of an impartial historian. And, when you turn from the impartial historian to ask the millions of the servants of CHRIST, either in their letters, in their lives, or in the records which they have spoken and left behind them, what their testimony is, I believe they would sum it up—million after million—in these words :

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"I came to JESUS, and I found
In Him my Star, my Sun ;
And in that Light of life I'll walk
'Till travelling days are done."

Now, of course, the object of the mission is to bring this historical, literal truth home to every soul, without one left out, and to let JESUS CHRIST, the Light of the world, dispel every cloud that rests on every soul in the West End of London. That is the object. God alone knows, and the last day will only declare, how much the mission of love will attain its object. But we are only concerned with those souls, redeemed, brought back, belonging to Heaven, to whom I now speak. Let us take the clouds one by one and look at them.

1. Let us suppose that someone here is covered with a cloud of sorrow—I expect there are a great many in that position; you could hardly count the people in London to-day who are under a cloud of terrible sorrow. How is JESUS CHRIST going to dispel that cloud of sorrow for you? I want to speak to you as if you were alone with me in my room, and as if I were speaking to you one by one. In the first place, He helps that cloud of sorrow by shining upon it. If you look down upon a cloud in the valley when the sun is shining, it is rosy, red, bright on the outer side of the cloud. My brother or sister, if you could see your sorrow from Heaven's point of view, it is bright on the outer side. That

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is the first thing. The sun illumines the cloud. It is not sent in hate or because GOD has forgotten you, but in love. That is the first thing, and it is a great thing, even if it went no further than that. Then, again, as the sun shines upon that cloud and you follow the teaching of JESUS, the Light of the world, you will find something more—that in the shadow of that cloud you will have companionship with Himself, which you never could have had in the bright sunshine before. I think some of the most touching words in the whole Testament are these: “Are ye able to drink of the cup which I drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” Are ye able? If you at present have this great sorrow on you, do not you see that is exactly what JESUS says to you?—“Are ye able to drink of the cup that I drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” It is not a mark of hate, it is a mark of love. Therefore, if you are below in the clouds, still attend church, still hold to your prayers, still look through the sorrow to the personal Master, and you will find that that cloud is gradually being dispelled for you.

And, then, one more thing with regard to the cloud of sorrow. No one else in the world could tell us that that cloud would one day end. I do not know any philosopher that I have ever read who has done me any good in my sorrow, or that I could even speak of to any people in the many

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sorrows that come before me in my work. The Stoics merely tell you, "Bear it as well as you can"; but there is no comfort in that at all. JESUS CHRIST tells us this: it will come to an end—it will probably come to an end here, perhaps sooner than you think; but in any case it comes to an end there, where there is no more sorrow or crime, when

"Ten thousand times ten thousand,
In sparkling raiment white,
The armies of the ransomed saints
Throng up the steeps of light.
'Tis finished! all is finished,
Their fight with death and sin;
Fling open wide the golden gates,
And let the victors in."

You could not say that if you were not a Christian; and therefore do try, you with the cloud of sorrow on you, to let the sun shine through. It is trying to shine through; He is there, the same yesterday and to-day and for ever; but if you have given up your prayers, if you do not open your Bibles; if you have let your sorrows drive you away, you are not following the Light of life, and therefore you are still in the cloud.

2. Or, again, take someone who is under a heavy cloud of sin. The worst cloud is the cloud that is unrecognised, and therefore unrepented. I want the souls so burdened to be alone with CHRIST. There, because it is the presence of the sun that melts the icy heart into streams of penitence, in

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the quiet place, hushed from the busy turmoil of life, ask yourselves by the Ten Commandments, as He interprets them, how you stand in His sight. What is the object of your life at this moment? Are you really trying to love the LORD your GOD with all your heart? What is the purpose on which your life is bent? Is it to be richer, or to be popular, or to be famous? What is the thing that you love? Can it be that there are already in your character some graven images which you are worshipping? What do your thoughts naturally turn to when you are by yourself? Is it to yourself—something that you want to be? Is that the thing you are always worshipping? is that the thing that your mind keeps turning to over and over again? You may go to church, or go to some other place of worship with the body, but it does not follow that you are worshipping the Being to whose honour that house is dedicated. The worship is inside. I pray you to ask yourself in the presence of JESUS CHRIST what you are really worshipping. Do you ever take the name of the LORD in vain? What is the real value of these hymns and prayers and anthems that you utter in church? Are you following them in your mind; or are you, as not infrequently happens, taking the name of the LORD in vain? What about your Sundays? What is the value of your worship? Are you like the woman in the Gospels who brought a costly box

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of ointment because it was costly? What is the value of a man's worship if he goes to church when he has got nothing especial to do, or when it is too wet to do something else? What about your home life—you who were sent into the world, and have others in your care at home? What sort of a father are you? what sort of a mother? what sort of a child? What would people over whom you have an influence say about your influence on them? Can anyone here stand up and say, "It is that person, it is that woman, it is that man's influence, that has injured and killed my soul"? If so, remember "thou shalt do no murder." What about the thoughts—the impure, horrible, degrading thoughts—that are harboured sometimes in the mind, and dwelt upon with pleasure? Is that no breach of the Seventh Commandment? Is everyone's reputation safe in your hands; or do you think nothing, round your table or in your drawing-room, of lightly stealing the good name from someone which you can never restore? Can we all stand up and say that we are absolutely truthful in our life to-day in thought and word and deed, and that not one of us is coveting social distinction, social advancement, and in the coveting of it being spiteful to others, ill-natured, pushing past in order to get something away from them? I do believe that we in the West End of London, quite as much as those in the East End, have in the quiet times of Lent to go

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down upon our knees and think over for what purpose we were sent into the world. "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, to bear witness to the truth." What sort of a witness have I borne up to now?

And then, when the cloud of sin is recognised, it is the one great miracle of the world that the Sun of Righteousness can dispel it. It can, thank God! And, therefore, you who may have some unrecognised, unforgiven, undispelled cloud of sin, follow the Light of the world, follow His instructions carefully. Find it out, tell it out, lay it at the foot of the Cross, and you who now are covered with this cloud of sin shall look up and see the face of God in the Light of life; but no one can do it for you.

(3) And then, once again, take the cloud of mystery. It was Dean Church who said: "We are like children lost on a dark common at night." That is exactly what we are. When the Christian missionaries came in those early days, one of the heathen said: "Let us hear what he has to say. The soul is like that bird that has just flown through the hall and out again into the darkness; it has come into the light for a few minutes, and has flown out into the darkness again. That is what the soul is; and if this missionary has anything to tell us about where it comes from and where it goes to, let us hear what he has to say." He was a wise man, and he knew what he was speaking

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about. But for the Light of the world, no one could say where we come from or whither we go. One of the revelations of the world is contained in what is said of JESUS CHRIST: "*JESUS, knowing that He came from GOD and went to GOD, girdeth Himself with a towel, and washed the disciples' feet.*" Therefore, you who are in that terrible cloud of agnosticism, this is your offer of light. You long to believe that that dear wife and child of yours will not be separated from you for ever; you would like to know, at any rate, where the dear child was going to when he or she was taken from you. I ask you to come back to the Light of the world. It was meant for you. It may be some hideous misunderstanding which keeps you away. But come back; look at it again. You gave it up years ago. Listen again. "I am the Light of the world. I have come to say where you come from and whither you go." "In My FATHER's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you." Hundreds of doubters, not excepting many of us who have known in the past what doubt is, thankfully acknowledge that in the Light of the world we have seen light; and that life is a different thing to us because we see now that those we love have come from GOD, and go to GOD, and that we ourselves are only resting here for a few passing years to have our characters formed and moulded, that we may live with GOD, of His infinite mercy, for ever.

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And so, "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness." Oh, that I could persuade every soul who reads this to follow CHRIST, to come back again to the neglected prayer—in the prayer to seek a personal LORD, and not to pray as a mere matter of so many collects to be said through, but to follow a real personal JESUS when you come to church, and speak the prayers and hymns to Him; to follow Him when He says, "Take, eat, this is My body; drink this, it is My blood"—to follow Him equally when He says, "Go home, and tell them what great things the LORD hath done for thee"; or when He says, "You are a chosen vessel unto me; I will send thee far hence to the Gentiles." And if you do, I know that you will say at the end of your life:

"I came to JESUS, and I found
In Him my Star, my Sun;
And in that Light of life I'll walk
Till travelling days are done."

IV

“BEHOLD, I STAND AT THE DOOR”*

“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock : if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.”—REV. iii. 20.

IT is with a very great sense of thankfulness and encouragement that I look upon the work done by our West End Mission. I suppose that it is really want of faith in the living, ever-present CHRIST that makes it almost a surprise to see the extraordinary response that has been given, during the mission, to the simple teaching of the elementary truths of the Gospel. Yet we should have known that if, as a people, we called upon GOD, asking for the pouring out of the HOLY SPIRIT, the HOLY SPIRIT would be poured out, that JESUS CHRIST would certainly show Himself if we prayed to and trusted Him. Many hearts have been touched ; the work of the mission has been felt far beyond the churches in which it was held ; and I have been much touched by what has been said to me in a private letter from one of the best-known men in London, that he has never known hearts

* Preached in St. Peter's, Cranley Gardens, on the third Sunday in Lent, 1905.

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more ready to respond to spiritual appeals during his whole experience of London life.

I should like to say to the writer of another letter which I received in the course of the mission—a letter giving pages of difficulties—that I can give, at any rate, this answer to those difficulties. No one can help having difficulties. I could write down pages of my own, but the answer is the answer of the blind man in St. John's Gospel. The man was cured ; the people proved to demonstration that the person who cured him could hardly, in their view, have been even a good man ; but what did the man who had been blind say ? “ Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not : one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.” And, therefore, the real answer to all difficulties, through which we often have to work our way to faith, is that JESUS CHRIST lived, that He did bring sight to the blind, that He did cleanse the leper.

And now, further, having already watched the blind receive their sight, and the lepers being cleansed, during this mission, having seen the proud Saul turned into the humble St. Paul, let me take one of the most touching things—not said actually by JESUS CHRIST on earth, but said by Him as St. John pictured Him speaking in the spirit, as He passed by : “ Behold, I stand at the door, and knock : if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.” That is just what happens

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in a mission in a poor district. Perhaps there is a torchlight procession through some crowded working-class district, and all of a sudden it comes to a closed door; no one is at the door; no light is to be seen; no notice is taken, and the missionary—how often have I done it!—goes up to the door and knocks. The mission has come, and this door is not opened, when nearly everyone else in the street has opened the doors; the missionary stands at the door and knocks. That is a picture of what JESUS CHRIST does at the door of the heart: He finds it closed, but He knocks, and stands at the door, and gives the invitation, “If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.”

The first thing to notice is the extraordinary condescension of the order. I always associate this church with the fact of our having meditated together one Lent upon CHRIST’s friendship: “Henceforth I call you not servants, but I have called you friends.” A more living picture can hardly be given of what friendship meant than in the text. It is almost as if He suggests mutual help; two friends are to sup in the house together. JESUS longs for our love, praise, thanks, and trust, and He sits down to sup with us; it is perfectly true that He wants our friendship. One reason why He knocks is that He may come into the heart and sup with us, and we with Him;

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there is just that giving and receiving of love and confidence which exists in a true friendship.

What a message this is for lonely people! There are so many lonely people in London, people who have once had family circles and friends. Is not this idea of JESUS CHRIST's friendship a wonderful antidote for loneliness? Lonely people can always have His society, and can have therefore a paradise on earth. This friendship, this daily intercourse with the noblest of friends, if really used, will carry us through the most lonely and desolate time. As for those who are never alone, those who are in the full swing of what we call "society," is there not an awful danger that that "society," the friends, the countless engagements, the little things that fill the time, may leave no time for the noblest society, for the noblest Friend—may leave no time to prepare for happiness with Him for ever and ever, in another world?

If, then, the first thing that strikes us is the fulness of the friendship offered by JESUS CHRIST, surely the second thing is the touching persistence of the knocking. What was that sickness that is almost forgotten, that sickness two or three years ago, when we made so many resolutions to lead a different life, and nearly forgot all about those resolutions in twelve months, when we were quite well again? That was the knocking at the door. What was that crushing disappointment that seemed to shake the very centre of one's life?

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That was another knocking. What was the gentle warning of the friend who risked one's friendship to tell one something about oneself? One felt very angry at the time, but what really was it? It was the knocking, the warning knocking. If we look back and think over why it was that sorrow, that sickness, that warning came, we shall see that it was the knocking of the Chief Missioner outside the door of our heart. Now He comes and knocks again at the door. We never know when the last knock will come, but with the last knock but one comes the call of death, and then, whether we have listened or not to the other knocking, we must follow the angel of death, and pass away. Death has not come yet to any of us, but we do not know how soon it may come. Now, it is the gentle knocking of the Saviour, who gives us one more loving invitation to let Him come in.

Now, what are the chief obstacles which keep people from opening the door to JESUS CHRIST? The first thing, undoubtedly, very often is an Englishman's reserve. I do not speak of that reserve in any tone of contempt; as an Englishman, I know that it is one of the best things about us. We do not wear our hearts on our sleeves; we do not believe in talking too fluently about religion; there is an instinct that tells us not to do so. On the other hand, reserve can and often does reach down between a man and

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his Saviour, and often I recommend that reserved people, having difficulties, should go with them to the parish priest; over and over again I have known men with difficulties which half an hour's talk would have removed. Are not some of you—especially, perhaps, men—by your reserve, keeping yourselves from the help CHRIST means you to have in the loving ministry of His Church? Undoubtedly this reserve not unfrequently hardens into a kind of wall between a man and JESUS CHRIST. Is that the reason why the door is closed? Are you really too proud to own that you are nothing by yourselves? What is wanted in the spiritual life is humility, and we need to pray that JESUS will break down the wall of reserve. Is that the reason, with some of you, why the door is closed?

Secondly, there may be another reason for not wanting JESUS CHRIST inside: it might be because you all know that inside that closed door, in the inner recesses of your nature, you are supping with someone else. There may—unknown even to your dearest earthly friend—be some darling sin, or wicked enjoyment, which, in your thoughts, if not in word and action, is indulged in. You cannot ask CHRIST in. Well, you have to choose, and it is a choice between heaven and hell, between purity and impurity. I plead with you to make up your minds now.

Thirdly, there is another reason which makes people not care to open the door. It is this—that they have heard the voice so often, they have heard

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the knocking so constantly, that they have become quite accustomed to it ; it makes no impression upon them. They are like men sleeping in a house near a railway. The first night in that house they wake up with a start when the express goes by ; the next night they wake again, though not with quite such a start ; the third night they only stir in their sleep ; and the fourth night they never wake at all. That is very often the case with the Gospel message ; men get so accustomed to hearing the knocking Sunday after Sunday that no impression is made upon their innermost being ; they become Gospel hardened. They feel that they have heard it all before ; it is the old, old story—so old that it makes no impression. I ask, in all love, that if you feel that you are Gospel hardened, you will hearken to what the LORD would say concerning you. Then you will wake with a start, and say to yourselves that that is the knocking of the Saviour upon the closed door, will let Him in, that He may sup with you, and you with Him.

Fourthly, there are people who are apt to think that missions are un-Churchy ; but is there no danger, even amongst orthodox Church-people, of a hardened, mechanical Churchmanship, of the use of the Sacraments without any feeling of love or devotion ? Can we ask for a more beautiful thought to call us to our Communion than the thought St. John puts before us, “ If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to

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him, and will sup with him, and he with Me"? If we are faithful, regular Church-people there will be a revival of love for JESUS CHRIST.

One word more. No one who has seen that great picture, "The Light of the World," can forget how the brambles are shown growing over the door, making it so very difficult to open it. Is not that a true picture of some of our lives? Is there not the overgrowth of habit? Is there not the danger of being engaged in so many things that there is no time even to talk about opening the door to JESUS CHRIST? If that is so, I ask you to recast your lives, to tear the brambles away from the door; to consider whether your work, your society duties, your pleasures, your engagements, are consistent with a devoted Christian life. If they are not, they must be ruthlessly torn away, that the door may be opened for JESUS CHRIST.

Be zealous, therefore, and repent. Repent of the pride which keeps the door shut; repent of the callousness which has come from hearing His message so often; repent of that inner sin which makes you wish to keep the door shut; repent of that mechanical Churchmanship which has killed your love for CHRIST; repent of the brambles which have overgrown the closed door, and let the answer to the knock from every heart be this:

"Oh, come to my heart, LORD JESUS!
There is room in my heart for Thee."

V

ONE THAT HATH AUTHORITY*

“All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth” (A.V.) ; “All authority hath been given unto Me in Heaven and on earth” (R.V.).—ST. MATT. xxviii. 18.

I THANK God that from all sides—and not only in one church, but through the ministry of others in many churches—testimony is forthcoming that the hearts of the people have been specially open to receive the message of our West End Mission. We have repeatedly had to thank God for the doubters who have come through their doubts, and for the lepers who have been cleansed. We have heard of the blind receiving their sight and of the cleansing of the leper ; we have heard Him say : “I am the Light of the world,” “Come unto Me, all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,” “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock” ; and we have considered the obstacles which close the door and keep Him out—the Englishman’s reserve, the frost of custom, the barrier of unbelief.

* Preached in the Parish Church, Kensington, on the fourth Sunday in Lent, 1905.

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But we should lose the full message which JESUS speaks as He passeth by if we leave out the imperial note He uttered. It is not only that He stands at the door and knocks ; but He claims the whole Imperial power in heaven and in earth. I would say to an honest doubter who wrote to me to say that he was puzzled over the sentences in which JESUS seemed to minimise His position : Is there any minimising in this claim that "all authority is given unto Me in heaven and in earth"?

First of all, then, we will consider JESUS CHRIST as the sole authority in heaven and in earth. And that gives us at once the clue to the difficulty which drives unthinking people to the Church of Rome. Where does the authority in the Church lie? And there is only one answer to this from those who understand the Scriptures and the teaching of the Fathers, and that is that the authority in the Church is JESUS CHRIST Himself. People have come to imagine that He delegated His authority to a set of men to be substitute for Him. The true ancient doctrine of the Church Catholic is that no man has any authority but JESUS CHRIST, and that we are the representatives of a present CHRIST, and not the substitutes for an absent One. For instance, we bind two souls together in holy matrimony. By whose authority are they bound? By the authority of the Church? Not at all, but by the authority of JESUS CHRIST. When I stand

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as His representative, and say, with my hand upon their joined hands, "Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder," and when afterwards I say, "I pronounce that they be man and wife together," I speak in the name of an unseen Person behind me of whom I am the representative. And I make those assertions by the authority of JESUS CHRIST Himself. Let us make no mistake on that point. We have not time to discuss in detail all the vexed controversies that gather around the marriage question; but be certain of this—that those who are fighting for the sanctity of marriage are fighting for the authority of JESUS CHRIST against the opinion of the world.

So when the words of Absolution are proclaimed by the priest in the Holy Communion, or when in the Office for the Visitation of the Sick he is told to say, "I absolve thee from all thy sins," it is done by the authority of JESUS CHRIST. In that wonderful story of the healing of the palsied man, JESUS CHRIST Himself says, "The Son of man had authority on earth to forgive sin." So, again, when we are actually celebrating the Holy Communion, we see with the eye of faith a Greater One pleading the one Sacrifice in Heaven. As Joseph's brethren held up the blood-stained coat to tell their father that their brother was dead, we hold up, as it were, the blood-stained coat and say :

"Look, FATHER, look on His anointed face,
And only look on us as found in Him";

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but it is only effective because at heaven's altar the great High Priest pleads the Finished Sacrifice before the throne of God.

As, therefore, He has all authority, so it is He alone who can lay down the rules of the kingdom of God. Some people seem to imagine that it is some ecclesiastically-minded person who lays so much stress on Baptism and Holy Communion. But who is it says, "Except a man be born of water and the SPIRIT, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven"? Who was it said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the SON of GOD, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you"? Whilst these words cannot be confined to the Holy Communion, they must have their highest meaning there. Who said, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven"? It is JESUS CHRIST, and He has authority to lay down the rules of the kingdom of God.

And again, who is it that lays down the laws of happiness? Let us take them in their order. Happy are the poor in spirit, happy are they that mourn, happy are the meek, happy are those that hunger and thirst after righteousness, happy are the merciful, happy are the pure in heart, happy are the peacemakers, happy are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. Who lays down these laws? JESUS CHRIST. And as we listen to them, for GOD's sake, as we value the peace of our homes and the happiness of our life,

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remember that He has authority to lay them down for us, and that authority has been given to Him in heaven and in earth.

And before we say a word about the power of JESUS CHRIST which goes with the authority, let me ask you whether, as you hear this claim to the sole authority in heaven and earth, you have, every one of you in your home, in your personal life, bowed yourselves to the authority of JESUS CHRIST. I have found some of the most regular Church-people who were living double lives. Are there any of you who are living double lives, and who have not obeyed, and are not obeying, the authority of JESUS CHRIST; who are tampering with His marriage law; who, in spirit, if not in letter, are fostering disloyalty, which, unless God save you, will break out into open disloyalty to the laws of marriage; who have not brought your sins to Him who alone has authority to forgive sins? I plead with you, if that is so, not to let Him pass by without asking Him who alone can do it to roll that burden off your soul.

Are those laws of happiness which He laid down being observed in your life? You have been baptized: have you received that complement of Baptism—Confirmation? Are you steadfast and devout communicants? Are you happy in your own personal life? If not, which law are you breaking? Are you not poor in spirit? Are you not mourning? Are you not

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humble-minded, and therefore do not inherit the earth? Is your own proud, self-seeking spirit the very reason that you are disliked by your friends? When you come to church do you see God before you? If not, is it because you are not pure in heart? "Happy are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Are you persecuted for righteousness' sake, or is your greatest wish, as so many have told me was theirs, the thirst for popularity? He says to all rebellious souls, unhappy because of their rebellion: "Bow your meek heads before Me, who hath authority in heaven and in earth; and in bowing your meek heads, ye shall find rest unto your souls."

Yet if we stopped there I have a feeling that this would be an unloving message. Our subject is not only the authority, but the power of JESUS CHRIST. Power to do what? Power, first, to save the worst. I feel certain that the reason so many stories are preserved in the New Testament—the reason, for instance, that we are told about Mary Magdalene, who now walks in white in Heaven—was the awful risk that some might despair. I have come across so many who are in despair in London, and who have said, "That which I have told you is my secret curse, and I cannot break it." If any one of you has been struggling like that, who has been afraid to tell anyone about it, let him seek a brother's help, and best of all that of a brother who has authority given him to help you,

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and be directed by him to the only Person who has power in heaven and in earth. I know that He can do it, for I have seen JESUS CHRIST break chains of sin which have been forged for many years.

But He has not only power to save, but power to keep safe. Are you, dear mothers, praying for your boy, that he may be kept safe amidst the temptations of the public school? Then turn in faith to the omnipotent power of JESUS CHRIST, who can keep him pure. Think of the many souls whom He has kept strong in the fire of temptation. How else are we to account for the martyrs of Sebaste, who were frozen to death, or the martyrs of Uganda and China, the lads in great business houses in London, the girls in the great shops, who week after week and month after month stand up in a storm of persecution against temptation? When that poor distracted girl says, "JESUS, help me," there is poured into her soul in a flash the whole power of CHRIST in heaven and in earth.

Again, He has power in answer to intercession to help our dear ones. No story is more encouraging to those who are anxious about their relatives and friends than that story of the four friends who let down their sick friend through the roof to the feet of JESUS. "JESUS, seeing *their* faith, said to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins are forgiven thee." You who are despairing of an answer remember

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the example of those who—to use the expressive word in the New Testament—were “digging” through the roof; and remember that there is One who has power to save in heaven and earth.

Then there is the power to comfort. How paralysed we often are in the presence of mourners! I was not long ago with a mother whose boy had been killed by a motor-car, and I have a letter from her which much encouraged me. At first nothing would comfort her; but at last, to use her own expressive phrase, she wrote: “I shall never forget that you have pointed me to the only One who can really understand the agony of one’s heart and give comfort.” I have taken a mother by the hand to see her little daughter dead in the mortuary of a hospital, and I heard her shriek of despair, which still runs through my ears. What can we say in such hours as those? Nothing, except to point to the One who has power to comfort, and does comfort, the bereaved.

Lastly, He has all power to understand. He understands all about you. If you are misunderstood at times by your friends, JESUS CHRIST understands all about you—all your difficulties, all the details of your life—and if you will only trust Him, He will explain them and guide you. We can help you personally as far as possible, but we can only do anything as the agents and ministers of One who has power to understand:

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“ Oh, come to the merciful Saviour who calls you,
Oh, come to the LORD who forgives and forgets ;
Though dark be the fortune on earth that befalls you,
There's a bright home above, where the sun never sets.”

Submit your rebel wills to His authority, and so find your true peace. Come and charge yourselves with His unfathomable power, and you shall have power in yourselves to comfort the world.

VI

THE CROSS THE SURPRISE OF THE WORLD*

"We preach CHRIST crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness."—I COR. i. 23.

"JESUS OF NAZARETH passeth by." Let us repeat once more that motto of our West End Mission. Certainly, if anyone had any doubt that JESUS can "pass by," if anyone had any doubt that GOD is faithful to His promises, and that the HOLY SPIRIT is poured out in answer to special prayer, then the things that have been seen and known during this mission will convince him that GOD is ever faithful to His word, and that JESUS of Nazareth is as strong as ever. He can bend the will of the impenitent, He can comfort the mourner, He can cast out unclean spirits.

When we come to Passion Sunday, the course of our meditations is bound to take a different turn. We have been passing on in our procession, watching JESUS of Nazareth at work. But on Passion Sunday the procession as it

* Preached in St. Peter's, Eaton Square, on the fifth Sunday in Lent, 1905.

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sweeps along turns, as it were, a corner, and stops dead in front of a cross. And our subject, therefore, on Passion Sunday is "the Cross—the surprise of the world." The only Person in that procession who was not surprised was the Person whom we have seen knocking at the closed doors, giving His invitation to the world, "Come unto Me, all ye that are weary"; "I am the Light of the world"—to that Person alone the Cross was no surprise. He had to attune His will to the Divine will; He spoke of "His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem," and perhaps one of the fiercest temptations He had to undergo was whether He should go back with the visitants from heaven and avoid the Cross altogether. But it was no surprise to Him—"The Son of man is come," he had said distinctly, "to give His life as a ransom for many." But what a terrible shock it was to His disciples! You cannot help seeing how these young fishermen enjoyed His popularity, and loved to see these crowds hanging on the words which fell from His lips; but they shunned the cross, and it was a terrible trial and shock to their faith. I have in my private room at Fulham a picture of a Bedouin shepherd with his flock. He is supposed to be looking at the cross as it appeared on the day after Good Friday—an ugly thing, with the rope still hanging from one of the arms of it. His look is one of amazement, and he seems to be

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saying, "What is this foul thing in the midst of God's fair creation?" and it was something like that shock of amazed surprise which came upon the disciples. It seemed impossible that He should die a malefactor's death. It seemed to be a surprise even to the angels. We were told that there were certain things into which the angels strained their eyes—that is the right translation—to look. It is the Cross that seems to have surprised them most. Their song of praise in Heaven ever is "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive glory, honour, power, and blessing." And, if it were a surprise to the disciples and the watching angels, it was a rude shock and a stumbling-block to the Jews. If ever there had been a chance that any would have accepted Him as the Messiah, it was ruined by the cross. They were ready to accept Him to work miracles, to preach, to conquer, and to lead them; but that the Messiah should be nailed on the vulgar cross with two thieves was a surprise and a stumbling-block.

And if it was to the Jews a stumbling-block, to the thinkers of the world it was a subject for derision. We have a picture from the Palatine of a man worshipping a crucified ass, and the picture gives us an idea of the insults which the early Christians had to bear. It was inscribed, "Alex-amenos worshipping his God." So the intellectual thinkers—the Greeks, who loved new and beautiful

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ideas—found the Cross a matter of derision ; it was to the Greeks foolishness. And to the comfortable and æsthetic in all ages the Cross has been a stumbling-block, and the unaccepted surprise of the world.

And when we ask ourselves to-day, What do we, at the beginning of the twentieth century, think about the Cross? I believe over and over again that, if we took our minds and souls one by one, it would still be to many an unaccepted surprise. What, for instance, my brother, do you really think about sin? Our mission is charged with realities, and all the teaching you have in this church is meant to make Lent a special time of reality. So the first thing we must do is to put away all make-believes. What do you think of sin? I believe that many men think sin is a kind of necessity, a kind of undeveloped good, something about which too strong language must not be used, and in their theology the Cross is still an unexplained surprise.

So, again, do we all believe that it was the Eternal Son of God who died upon the cross? Who was it said that the Christian world was full of unconscious Arianism? I believe that if we cross-examined numbers of Church-people we should find that the Cross still has so little power over their imagination and lives because it is still an unaccepted surprise. Then, too, there must be among you the young and the happy. One remembers how in the days of boyhood the tragedy

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of the Cross seemed to cut across the happiness of life. And, again, it is a surprise to those who quite conscientiously are preaching the Gospel of salvation by change of circumstances, by Christian philanthropy, who believe that, by giving better houses, more open spaces, and more air, you have regenerated mankind without this unexplainable mystery of the Cross. If so, there are four things which I pray God may be revealed to us in our present meditations.

The first is the deadliness of sin. We have seen it—at least, God knows it has been seen—poisoning the lives and wrecking the homes of some whom we little knew were having their homes destroyed and their lives wrecked by sin. And I pray that the HOLY SPIRIT, who alone can pierce through self-complacency and an Englishman's reserve and self-deception, may reveal to anyone who is playing with a sin that the accursed thing will ruin him in time. Of course, if you think sin is undeveloped good, and that this or that guilty friendship is innocent, and do not care to take any trouble, it is nothing to you. But if JESUS strikes that hard, impenitent heart with the Cross, as Moses struck the rock, then I believe that from the heart of the most impenitent—and I have come across cases of sins which have been going on for twenty years—the tears of penitence will flow out, and that penitent man or woman will find the surprise of the Cross a surprise of love.

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You will find that He has been waiting for you all this time. You will be as the people looking up at the brazen serpent—you will look and live. But without penitence you cannot be saved.

Secondly, there is a fear that God will not do for us what we would do for one another. Do you remember one of the most lovely passages in English literature, where, in the marvellous poem of "Saul," the shepherd-boy David is led from one height to another to understand the will of God? There in front of the shepherd-boy was the stricken King. David's heart filled with love towards the King, to whom he was sent :

"See the King—I would help him but cannot, the wishes
fall through.

Could I wrestle to raise him from sorrow, grow poor to
enrich,

To fill up his life, starve my own out, I would—knowing
which,

I know that my service is perfect. Oh, speak through me
now !

Would I suffer for him that I love ? So wouldst Thou—
so wilt Thou !"

There is no answer to that argument. Can it be possible that some of you in your blindness are putting your God lower than yourselves? How low we must put God in our minds—how infinitely below ourselves—if we think He would not have done what we almost expect the noblest of men to do ! Do we honour the young man

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who leaps from the railway platform in the fog and saves the life of a woman, and yet deny to our God the privilege of doing the same? You mothers who would sacrifice yourselves for your children, from whom do you get that feeling of self-sacrifice? You get it from God. Go down upon your knees and ask to have brought home to you the love of God. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son."

Then, thirdly, what about the Cross as a surprise to the happy and comfortable? I will speak to the mother, who, if she be here, will be glad of the message, whose boy was killed almost before her eyes. What has the Cross done for you? If CHRIST had not shown that He could bear pain, and that He was acquainted with grief, how could we bear to have our dear ones snatched from us? Remember, you who are young and happy, that some day you will find the comfort of the suffering He bore for you two thousand years ago.

What about the Gospel of comfort? Do better circumstances and change of surroundings do away with the necessity of the Cross? I ask those of you who have comfortable homes, with a change to the Riviera in winter and to Scotland in summer—does this make you good by itself? I would rather ask you who think the Gospel of comfort is *the* Gospel to get away for a time from your own comfort, and at the foot of the Cross in Passion

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Week ask yourself: Is my comfortable life ruining me? Is it my comfort that makes me care so little for my prayers, and makes the face of CHRIST so far away from me? Get away from your comfort, as you will have to do when you face death and face the Cross by yourselves. Say, as you kneel there, "He loved me and gave Himself for me," as St. Paul did. And as you kneel there hear Him ask you this question: "This I have done for thee. What hast thou done for Me?" And, before it is too late to change your life, come to the Cross and give yourselves to CHRIST as He gave Himself for you. Ask to have it brought home to you that the Cross, instead of being the surprise of the world, is the central fact of the universe and the standing proof of the power of God and the wisdom of God.

VII

THE CROSS THE GLORY OF HEAVEN*

"I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."
—REV. v. 11, 12.

I TAKE for our meditation now the Cross as the triumph of Heaven. I take it because I have discovered so many good people who come regularly to church, regularly to Holy Communion, and yet to whom the Cross is a far-away story still—people who long to feel it a greater reality, but who say: "We believe it all in a kind of way, but is there not a great deal of modern criticism which, perhaps, if we listened to it, would rob us of our faith?" "It all seems to us even now a tale of little meaning, though the words are strong."

* Preached in St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, on Palm Sunday, 1905.

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Now, I want first to convince you that you touch the bed-rock of fact when you touch the Cross, and that you are going to meditate now on something that nothing in this world can shake. Take, for instance, the Holy Communion as a historical thing. We touch the Cross in the Holy Communion. In the very service the Cross is embedded. Every time you come to it, the very words spoken to you tell you of the body broken and the blood shed; and no one has ever answered yet the argument that it would be perfectly impossible to have so enshrined a death like that in the thanksgiving service of the Church unless the resurrection had really happened.

Or, take the cross on the top of St. Paul's Cathedral. How did it get there? We forget too often, we Christians of to-day, that the cross was like the hangman's noose—as little romantic, just as shameful. How does that which two thousand years ago represented the hangman's noose come to be brandished in triumph over the greatest city of the world? That it is so is a historical fact. And as you look back century by century, and year by year, you find one ever-growing triumph of the Cross from the beginning.

I am speaking now to those who find belief difficult. Nobody can shake that fact, no criticism, no explaining this verse or that, no putting the books of the New Testament in a different order,

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no discovering that St. Mark may have been the original of the other two Synoptic Gospels—nothing of that sort touches the historical fact of the Cross. When you look up at St. Paul's with the cross on it, it is as though you went up and touched the cross on Calvary.

Or, again, take Roman history. Who was it said, "JESUS CHRIST was put to death when Pontius Pilate was Procurator of Judæa"? That is not in the Gospels. It was said by the Roman historian, Tacitus. It is an historical fact of Roman history.

Therefore, lift up the hands that hang down. Let every soul understand that when we speak of the meaning of the Cross, we speak of the meaning of an unshakable historical fact.

Or, again, a young man, whom I know well, in terrible trouble, with all his hopes for the time apparently blasted, and his soul very bitter, knelt in a little chapel not long ago. As he lifted up his eyes he saw a picture of our LORD crowned with thorns on the cross. Precisely as if something had been taken from Heaven and thrust into his soul, the peace of GOD came into his spirit. He lives in it now. That is an unshakable fact which some of you could repeat out of your own experience.

I have been asked many questions about sorrow. Do you not think that the reason that we have to endure sorrow is to make us understand the Cross,

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perhaps for the first time, and make what we have said to others, and, perhaps, even preached about, come home to us? We realise then that the Cross is the one fact of the world.

Or, again (and I only tell these things as I know them, and I know that those of whom I speak would wish them to be told to help others), I remember a poor woman demoralised—that is not too strong a word—before an operation. Faith was gone. Moral courage was gone. It seemed almost impossible to perform the operation because of her demoralised condition. Twenty-four hours after, with a perfectly firm step, clear faith, and without a tremor, she walked from her room to the operating-table, and the great surgeons of London asked, "What has been done to you?" And she replied perfectly frankly, looking into their faces: "Something, my friends, that none of you could have done." It was to them a miracle. Who had worked that miracle? JESUS CHRIST. It was the revival, by prayer and by recalling His strength and power to her, of her faith. CHRIST Himself put His power within her, and in His hope, in His strength, she lived through that tremendous hour.

Now, of course, when one sees these things time after time one knows. Until then we believed; from that moment we know. "We know that our fellowship is with the FATHER,

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and with His Son JESUS CHRIST." And we know that the Cross is the one great fact of the world.

When we turn from earth to Heaven we find that what we have gradually learned to be the one fact of earth is also considered the one fact in Heaven. We hear thousands, and ten thousands, and hundreds of thousands joining in a song of praise in Heaven, and we listen to hear what their song is. What is this great volume of sound which is echoing up from those blessed beings in Heaven? This is it: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." The one fact on earth is the one fact in Heaven; and what we brandish in triumph on St. Paul's Cathedral is the thing celebrated with triumph by the myriads of holy beings in Heaven. The Cross is the triumph of Heaven, as it is the one central fact on earth.

And when we ask, if we dare ask reverently, what it is about the Cross that so impresses, and transfixes, and inspires those adoring hosts in Heaven, we find, first, that they are astounded at the love. They had adored in Heaven the SON of GOD before He came to earth, and to see the Supreme Captain of the heavenly hosts, the eternal SON of GOD, washing the feet of Judas was tremendous; but to see Him held up between Heaven and earth on the bitter cross was a

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manifestation of the love of GOD which astounded even the angels.

Then, not only the love of it—"GOD so loved the world"—but the perfectly voluntary nature of it. There are so many objections and difficulties about what is said to be the injustice of the Atonement. The angels saw something very different from that. They saw a perfectly voluntary offering on the part of the SON of GOD: "I lay down My life: no man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself." It is the voluntariness of the Cross which makes them sing their songs of glory and praise.

And then the patience of it! Notice the words, "the Lamb of GOD." Look out in a concordance the number of times the phrase "the Lamb of GOD" is used in the Book of Revelation—partly, of course, because of the fulfilment of the types of sacrifice, but also because of the marvellous patience with which it was carried out. Notice the patience of CHRIST, and then look at your own patience. Is not that the astounding thing at Oberammergau—the silent, dignified patience with which the Lamb of GOD goes to His death, "led as a lamb to the slaughter," without a murmur, without a cry, His great soul wrapped in infinite patience? It is the patience of the Lamb which makes them cry their cry of glory in Heaven.

And then the redeeming power of it! When

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you think of all who die in London every day and night, think how many from that time to this have passed into Paradise, redeemed by the blood of CHRIST, "have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Therefore every year, every æon, adds keenness to the praise in Heaven. To this soul, that soul, those hundreds of thousands of souls, the redeeming power of the one glorious fact is effectual. It goes on, losing no power whatever as the ages pass.

Then the inspiration of it! Do you remember in the "Dream of Gerontius" the guardian angel says, as he guards a spirit into the presence of JESUS CHRIST :

"The eager spirit has darted from my hold,
And, with intemperate energy of love,
Flies to the dear feet of Emmanuel"?

Why did it fly to the dear feet of Emmanuel? Because that spirit had been drawn like a magnet all its life by CHRIST, and when the encumbrances of life were lifted off it went straight to its bourne.

Now, I speak to those who for a very few passing years—and remember how few they are—are spending a time of probation on this little resting-place we call earth before passing to their true destiny in another world, and my word to you is bound to be this: If the Cross is the great

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triumph fact on earth, and the great triumph fact in Heaven, how is the Cross affecting you? That is the point. What is it doing for you? A man must ask that question alone by himself, and a woman alone by herself, and a boy by himself, and a girl by herself.

And if you say, "Well, this would be the only honest answer: I do believe in a way, but I cannot feel that the Cross is the one great fact for me that guides my life," then, I pray you, go down upon your knees, and ask the HOLY SPIRIT to bring it home to you until it is for you the one thing in the world. It must govern, if it is true, the whole life. It is impossible to hold our Christian religion by our finger-tips as a kind of thing we vaguely believe. It is either everything or it is nothing.

Dwell, therefore, on each of the five things which so electrify and inspire the angels. Dwell first upon the love of the Cross. Do you remember how Browning so beautifully describes the feeling—putting, of course, consciousness into it—of the twig on which the bird rested for a moment before it climbed to the topmost branch?

"Oh! what a joy beyond measure
Was the poor spray's which the flying feet clung to,
Thus to be singled out, built in, and sung to!"

St. Paul knew exactly that feeling. He went down on his knees, and when he believed it all

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his pride melted away, and his self-righteousness, and he simply said: "He loved me, and gave Himself for me." And it is possible with every soul, however far off the Cross may be, to kneel down humbly; and the HOLY SPIRIT can take that Cross, and break the hardest heart, and melt the coldest. I would have every one of you kneel down and say, "He loved me, and gave Himself for me," until you believe it.

And then think of the voluntariness! Think of the perfectly voluntary offering, and then ask what you are doing with your lives. Read over what, in this ascription of praise, is said to belong to CHRIST. Worthy is the Lamb to have what? To receive authority. Then is that authority ruling in our lives to-day? Is every thought in captivity to CHRIST? Wisdom: then is our one thought to act according to the will of God? Riches: is the whole of our income, the whole of our property, felt by us to belong to JESUS CHRIST, and just managed by us for a few passing years before we see Him? That thought has got to govern every pound we spend if our riches belong to JESUS CHRIST. Strength: "They don't know yet where to go for strength," said one who knew the undergraduates of Oxford very well. Have you found where to go for strength? We can only do our work and bear our burdens in the strength of CHRIST.

I must leave you to ask the other questions by

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yourselves. Ask yourself whether each point which inspires the angels' praises is inspiring your life, and, above all, face the question asked you from the Cross: "This I have done for thee. What hast thou done for Me?"



Addresses to Men

VIII

"THE FURNACE OF TRIAL"*

"Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the SON of GOD."—DAN. iii. 24, 25.

I WISH to remove, or partly to remove, two misunderstandings—one an ancient one, and one a modern one. The first is that there is some kind of gulf, as it were, between the belfry and the church. I read with great interest an article in *Bell News* some time ago on "The History of Change-ringing," and read what the author, Mr. Daniel, had to tell us with regard to the origin of change-ringing—*e.g.*, that it had a secular origin; and if that was so, it is no wonder that there should grow to be some sort of distinction between the belfry and the church. That gulf we bridge over to-day. As Bishop of London, I want to show that I consider and value all those who work in the belfries and steeples of the diocese as my fellow-workers in the work of the Church,

* An address to bell-ringers.

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and to say that, whatever may have been the beginning or the history of these things, now we are all working together, with the one object ; the belfry, the steeple is consecrated as well as the body of the church. One reads, almost with amusement, that John Bunyan looked on change-ringing as being actually a temptation of the devil. We look upon it now as a sacred art to be consecrated to the good of the Church and the glory of GOD ; and we look upon those who work in the belfry as working in the spirit which becomes those who work for the Church of GOD.

And the other misunderstanding is quite a temporary one. When, some time ago, I had the pleasure of meeting the workers belonging to one particular association at Fulham, what I meant to do and hoped to do, and mean and hope to do to-night, is to make it perfectly clear that I count the members of *all* the associations as fellow-workers, and I welcome them all. I want you all to feel, whatever association you belong to—and I speak on my own behalf and on that of my brother Bishops—that we recognise your work in the spirit of which I have already spoken, and, therefore, I am going to speak to you as brother men. I am not sure that I quite believe in special sermons to special classes. After all, we are all men ; we meet on the ground of our common manhood.

Now, I want to say a word on the heat of trial,

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of temptation, and of persecution, which is often our lot in the life which we live on this earth. It would be folly for us to underrate that trial. I have seen with my own eyes things which remind me of the heat of trial which comes upon men. I was once preaching in one of our poorest districts, and within two hours several of the people in the next street were burnt to death, perhaps some of the very people who had been listening to me in that crowded church when I spoke of the shortness of life and the suddenness of death. And I was going on another occasion to one of our district churches to lay the foundation-stone of a chancel, and I saw a lad bicycling along the slippery road, and suddenly his bicycle skidded, he fell, and was crushed beneath an enormous waggon. We all come under the operation of the heat of trial ; we all come face to face with death.

So, again, it is no good underrating the fierce furnace of temptation. To many London is a burning fiery furnace of temptation. Some of the boys and girls of London are exposed to the most terrible temptations every day. Take some poor girl in a great business house ; she has been brought up in the country, has good ideas, has had good training ; she is tempted, and her fall into vice is made easy by her companions. Has she not come into a fiery furnace of temptation ? Or look at the young man thrown into the society of men who sneer at

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going to church or chapel, and who scoff at the Bible, with no one to encourage him. Is not that young man in a fiery furnace of temptation? When I look over the world, I see that these fiery furnaces of temptation beset many people's paths in life. Many believe themselves to be religious until the trial comes, and then their faith fails. A mother said to me once, "If my boy has to die that death, I will never believe in God again." And she is not the only one who says, "God cannot be a good God if He lets me suffer like this."

Most of us have at some time to meet these trials and temptations, and we turn to the glorious old story from which our text is taken, and the first thing which we learn from it is that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did not have to endure the burning fiery furnace because God was angry with them. That is what I find so often to be the sorest thing in people's trials: they imagine that God has forsaken them, and is cursing them when they have their trials. Nothing of the sort. You bell-ringers, of all men, ought to know that your bells must pass through the heat of the fire if they are to be without flaw and to ring true. Be certain that the first purpose of the burning fiery furnace of trial in this world is to mould us and bring us out of the furnace clear, true bells, that will ring true to the glory of God. And He sits above the fiery furnace, never letting it get too hot

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for His children, but tempering it to the heat which they can bear, looking into it until He can see His own face perfectly reflected in the metal. Some of you may be going now through a time of trouble, and I say to you, because you are being tried, do not imagine that God has forsaken you or loves you less. “Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth.” JESUS CHRIST went through a fiery time of trial, but over His head rang the verdict of Heaven, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Trial, therefore, however hot, is not a mark of the hatred of God.

Time after time we have to choose in life between enduring the fire and worshipping the golden image. I do not know of any age in which that golden image has been set more prominently before us than it is to-day. It is absurd to talk as if to possess riches was to be wicked, for, indeed, some of the richest people in London are amongst the most unselfish and the kindest people in London; but the picture in the Royal Academy of 1904 portraying the worship of Mammon is, to a certain extent, true to-day.

Some of you, where you work, have to choose between what is profitable and what is right. I learnt a great deal about human nature in Bethnal Green, and I remember a friend coming to me and asking for my advice. He said, “I have four pounds a week where I work. I am made to design

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things out of the square, and all my art and skill is used in pushing the trade of public-houses. Am I right or am I wrong to keep my post?" I remember consulting the then Bishop of London, and he said, "Let the man obey his conscience." In less than six weeks the man threw up that post for the sake of conscience. He chose between the fiery furnace of trial and acting against his conscience ; between worshipping the golden image, his good post, and doing what was right. And that choice comes to others ; it is often doing the will of God which plunges us into the burning fiery furnace.

Or, again, there is the danger of being content with mediocrity. Thank God ! there are noble characteristics about our race, and the average Englishman is splendid material for the HOLY SPIRIT to mould ; but still he often does not see that the worship of God is a necessary part of a true man's life. He has no enthusiasm for the spread of the Gospel ; he does not believe in foreign missions. Is it not only too easy for a man to be dragged down to the level of what public opinion thinks right ? Again and again it is the choice between the golden image of mediocrity, which the world will allow him to worship, and the worship of the SON OF GOD. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego chose the fiery furnace rather than the worship of the golden image, and so must the man of God to-day.

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And, then, lastly, I find not only that the burning fiery furnace is not a mark of the hatred of God, and that it often is a necessity to those who do the will of God ; but when I look to the end of the story, I find the most splendid comfort for those in trouble. “Did we not cast three men into the burning fiery furnace?” “True, O king.” “Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt ; and the form of the fourth is like the SON of GOD.”

Am I speaking to three men bound or four men loose? to three men bound by tradition or fear of their fellows, bound by bad habits, which they have not broken? or am I speaking to four men loose, free to worship God, free to follow conscience? Only can they be free if there is Another walking with them in the furnace. “And the form of the fourth is like the SON of GOD.”

Take JESUS CHRIST with you into your belfries, take Him with you into your steeples or towers, where you ring, and then we shall never hear of anything being done or said in that belfry which shall be a discredit to the Church of God. Do more than that : take Him into your personal lives, unite yourselves with Him by prayer, worship, and communion before the trial comes, and then, whatever the trial be, I shall have no fear, dear brothers of mine, for I shall know that you will go through that fire like these

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three men, "upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them." You will each be a living miracle, to the wonder of the world. "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt : and the form of the fourth is like the SON of GOD."

IX

VARIOUS ASPECTS OF UNBELIEF *

IT is very likely that, in this time of unbelief, many Churchmen who would say very little about it are affected by the atmosphere in which they live. It is well, therefore, to look at various aspects of unbelief, and endeavour to solve the difficulties that arise. There is intellectual unbelief, there is practical unbelief, unbelief which arises from the soul being unawakened to spiritual realities, unbelief which comes from familiarity—the familiarity which breeds contempt—and lastly, there is moral unbelief. I will try to say something in regard to each of these.

In regard to the first—intellectual unbelief—I take as my text one of the many hundreds of letters I have received, which seems to put the points of intellectual unbelief clearly, and may very well meet the case of many other people.

This doubter begins with the difficulty of the suffering and sorrow to be found in the world.

* Delivered at one of the Men's Meetings connected with the West End Mission.

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How is he to reconcile pain and suffering with the absolute supremacy of an all-good and loving GOD? It is a difficulty which has troubled him very much, and none of the attempted explanations of it seem to him adequate.

Let us admit at once that we shall never be able to explain this fully. We are all agnostics in a sense; we only know a part now of the whole mystery of life. St. Paul certainly said so: "Now we know in part, then shall we know, as also we have been known." But while we admit this, it is curious that this doubter should fix on the first thing which draws me as a thinking man to CHRIST. How am I to reconcile the suffering which for nine years I saw in East London with a perfectly good GOD? I could not do it if I did not believe in CHRIST. How could I care for a GOD who was careless of mankind, who had done nothing for humanity? That is the Unitarian's and Theist's real difficulty. But if I can believe in the Incarnation—that GOD came down into this suffering world and did what we Christians believe He did, then I have some ground of confidence in GOD. Neither you nor I, perhaps, could believe in a rose-crowned Apollo, who never dipped his fingers in the world's anguish; but we can follow to the death "a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." That is the whole difference. GOD, in the person of JESUS CHRIST, came down into the thick of it, like a general in a

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difficult campaign, who says to his troops: "Well, I cannot explain everything; I cannot explain fully why it is a hard campaign; but I can do this: I can bear the worst with you, and stand in the hottest of the fight, and share your rations." And men would follow that general to death.

GOD in CHRIST says: "I have many things to say to you, but ye cannot bear them now. I cannot explain all things to you, but I can make Myself One with you, and I do not ask you to bear a single thing that I do not bear first." That is the claim of GOD in CHRIST to our allegiance in the midst of suffering.

Then the writer of the letter goes on to say that it is not so much the fact of human misery, for that may be the result of the gift of free-will, but the suffering of the animal creation caused by the perpetual struggle for existence—different forms of life preying on one another. What purpose can be served by the terrible sufferings of innocent creatures?

Well, do not let us underrate this difficulty. Certainly to me for long it was a terrible difficulty. But my comfort comes from the naturalists, those who know Nature; and they will tell you that, on the whole, the animal creation is a happy thing. The rabbit that is going to die—and we men, too, all have to die sooner or later—has no foreknowledge of its coming death; and therefore, unless we are prepared to say that all death is a sign of a cruel

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Creator, or that for us to feed, as we do feed, upon the animal creation is a sign of cruelty, there is no argument, certainly, now in my mind that seems strong against the arrangement which we see, being the arrangement of a beneficent Creator.

And that I say without pretending to understand what St. Paul means when he speaks of the whole creation groaning and travailing for some revelation which is to come. It looks as if whatever pain there is in the animal creation was all part of some travail, in which it takes its share, in order to participate in glory in time to come.

But when we consider pain in itself, pain is a danger-signal ; and death, too, among us, and surely among the animals, is a merciful thing. We should have less happiness in the world if there were no death. If we all lived on, century after century, we should lose the great happiness of life—of the young and old living together, the grandfather and his grandchild. The more you think of it, death and pain in the light of CHRIST are no valid arguments against the love of GOD.

Then the writer goes on to say that among the Christian doctrines which he finds most difficult to believe in is the Incarnation, and in regard to this he mentions the statements as to our LORD's inferiority to the FATHER. "Our LORD says that His FATHER is greater than He ; that His doctrine

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is not His own, but His FATHER's ; that He does not bear witness of Himself, and so on."

Quite true. All these expressions of our LORD show that GOD the SON did His work in loyal obedience and with His eye fixed in perfect trust on GOD the FATHER. "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O GOD." They show that He was really man, otherwise it would be impossible for His Atonement to affect us at all. He was really man as well as GOD.

But if you use this argument, you must take the other statements of JESUS CHRIST. What mere man could say, "I am the Light of the world"; "Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest"; and again, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the FATHER"? "I" and "My FATHER" are one thing—not, as the writer thinks, "at one," but one thing.

We must remember that the Church has founded her belief on *all* the statements, carefully weighed, of JESUS CHRIST Himself, and I hope to convince the writer that he has only a partial conception of *some* of the statements of JESUS CHRIST. Think over these other statements I have made, and ask yourselves if it is possible for a moment to understand them unless JESUS CHRIST is more than man.

Then, again, the writer refers to our LORD's apparent harshness of speech on several occasions,

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“Ye serpents,” “Ye generation of vipers,” the cursing of the barren fig-tree, and so on.

Well, some of these may be puzzling instances taken by themselves; but are we to look upon a Being of perfect mercy as therefore debarred from saving souls by most strong warnings? I should say myself that time after time Christian preachers are far too merciful, that we are apt to dwell to-day too much upon the loving side of the Gospel, and to forget that there is the dark side, the fact of the free-will of man, which has to choose between life and death, and that even GOD Himself will not break that free-will. If He did He would break His own image in man. What is it that makes us so noble in the scale of creation? It is—is it not?—that we are free personal spirits, as GOD is a Free Personal Spirit. The very fact that we have freedom of choice helps to constitute in us the image and likeness of GOD. Every thinking man feels that he would rather be a living, sentient person with a free will than he would be bound to go either right or wrong.

Is not this the key to the stern sayings of our LORD? Dr. Pusey, whom you may take as representing, perhaps, the orthodox view of the strictest kind about hell, says—quoting, I think, from Faber—that no soul will ever be lost that has not had the FATHER throw His arms around him, look in his face with eyes of love, and then has deliber-

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ately rejected Him. "They have seen and hated both Me and My FATHER."

What, then, are we to think of these sayings of CHRIST? Are they not loving warnings of the awful risks run by a soul that persistently turns away? There are cases where habits of sin have become so ingrained that, humanly speaking, it is impossible to turn the soul back to GOD. These warnings are to prevent us from getting to the stage from which we cannot turn back, and that is a very present danger to every one of us. These warnings are a sign that JESUS CHRIST is our best Friend. He does not mind saying unpopular things for our good. There is the ever-lurking danger that by being perhaps pampered and made pleased with ourselves by unwise friends, we may be letting our free-will indulge in those things which our conscience knows to be wrong, until we may be unable to turn now or in eternity from the character which we formed for ourselves. Judas, you will notice, went to "his own place," the place he had made for himself, for which by hundreds of little judgments and decisions he had formed his character to be fit; and far and away the most awful declaration of judgment is that simple phrase that when you and I die we go to our own places. There is a kind of inevitableness about it; it seems to reveal a spiritual law of character, which carries its own punishment with it, and does justify most truly the justice of GOD.

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Therefore these stern things in the Gospel, instead of being against our belief in CHRIST, to my mind are signs of His goodness and friendship to the world. And when we ask why, as a matter of historical fact, it is that the world demands a good GOD, we find that it is these very writings of the New Testament which have made the world demand a good and loving GOD.

I turn now from discussing the other difficulties raised by the writer of this letter, to ask what are the positive facts which nothing can get over.

The first is, that JESUS CHRIST stands to-day historically in the world as by far the most influential Person, the leading Influence in Europe. How does it come about, according to the hypothesis of those who do not accept CHRIST, that One who lived two thousand years ago, a Jewish peasant, and died on the Cross, should be to-day what He undoubtedly is, the first Influence in the progressive nations of the world? We Christians have a perfectly reasonable hypothesis to explain it: that He appeared again, that He appeared upon the day which we call Sunday. Unless He did appear again, the Christian commemoration would clearly have been observed on Friday—the day on which He died. It was a strong thing to change the day from Saturday, which had always been observed as the Sabbath, to Sunday. He appeared to a weak, dispirited Church, which was on the point of breaking up, and sent His

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followers ringing into the world with such a sense of victory and conquest that they converted it. That is our explanation of the fact.

The second fact is, that while He does stand pre-eminent in Europe and in the world, winning thousands of converts every year, He makes these tremendous claims: "I am the Light of the world"; "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life"; "Before Me shall be gathered all nations, and I will separate them one from another"; and in spite of these tremendous claims, He is acclaimed by the world as the meekest and humblest of men. How are we to reconcile these two things? A character, at any rate, if it is perfect, must be humble and sincere, and yet it makes these imperial claims to the allegiance of the world. They can only be reconciled in one way, and that is by the truth of the claims. "What think ye of CHRIST, whose SON is He?" is the question with which He challenged the world years ago as He passed by, and He asks the same question of the men of to-day, and I pray God that every single one of my brother-men here may look up and answer back in the words of the age-long hymn, "Thou art the King of Glory, O CHRIST. Thou art the everlasting SON of the FATHER."

But there may be some of you who will say that these matters do not puzzle you, that they do not touch your case, and that all that I have been saying may be perfectly true, but religion

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has no hold upon you, it is not a living reality to you. That is what I call practical unbelief. And it is a very hard thing to say how you are to get that living belief in the living CHRIST, which is real faith. What I believe would help you is this. I am quite sure that seeing dying people, as a clergyman has to do, helps him very much, and having people come to him conscience-stricken with sin helps him much, because when you have a brother-man in front of you, and all the life is fading out of him, and he looks in your face with his dying eyes, you long to have something to tell him that will help him; and that is where your practical unbelief breaks down, if you have it. You cannot tell lies to the dying, and what are you going to tell that man who has, perhaps, but a quarter of an hour to live? Now, if you who are living in practical unbelief picture your wife or your dearest child dying before your eyes. What can you say to them? I know of nothing that you can say to the dying unless you believe in the truth of JESUS CHRIST's saying: "In My FATHER's house are many mansions, and if it were not so I would have told you." It is the only tangible reason you have for believing that the wife you have lost is still alive.

When you think of the stern realities of life and death you want CHRIST. You cannot live on in that kind of practical unbelief. Drag yourself to face the question: "Should I, or should I not,

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in my hour of death, if everything earthly were slipping from me, have a living Saviour in whom to believe?"

And then, again, I would ask of those who are conscious of sin in their lives: How are you going to be forgiven for that thing which you did five years ago, and which had a bad influence on another's life? You must undo the harm so far as you can, but that will not by itself win your pardon. It can only be obtained by looking at the Cross, and believing that "He loved me and gave Himself for me." And although I admit that the question of the Atonement is fraught with many difficulties, thank God, we poor sinners are saved, not by any theory of the Atonement, but by the fact of it.

And if in the light of the suffering and death and sin of the world you do not feel the importance of conversion to GOD through JESUS CHRIST, nothing in the world will make you. But if you realise that we are in the midst of a sinful and dying world, and rouse that dull imagination of yours to face the facts, I do believe that you will gain a living faith in JESUS CHRIST, and look up as He passes by and ask Him for a blessing.

And then, of course, there is the young man's unbelief. He does not believe because the scales are on his eyes. It is not that he disbelieves. He is like Saul before he was converted, like Mark when he turned back from the Apostles.

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The young men and boys here must pray that the HOLY SPIRIT may tear the scales from their eyes before they begin their man's life and work. They must hear JESUS say: "I am JESUS, whom thou persecutest," and must ask, "LORD, what wilt Thou have me do?" and then they will have an answer by which to guide their lives.

And then, lastly, are there any of you who have what I may call moral unbelief? I often think of what the Colonel of a regiment once said to a young subaltern who was always talking about the mistakes of Moses. "Where were you, sir, last night?" He knew his man pretty well. It was nothing to do with the mistakes of Moses or the Higher Criticism that was the matter with the young man. He had got an uneasy conscience that morning.

Although it would be untrue to say that all doubt to-day was due to that cause, yet there is always out of ten doubters and unbelievers at least one who cannot believe because of his life, because at the bottom of his soul he does not want to believe the truths about judgment and righteousness. To such I say, Do not deceive yourselves any more. Go down on your knees to-night, look into your life, and instead of blinding yourself with somebody else's doubt, be honest and say: "It is my sin which makes me doubt. LORD, have mercy upon me, a miserable sinner."

If in ways like this we cast away our unbelief,

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of whatever kind it may be, I believe that CHRIST can do something with us. Nay, He can do mighty works with us if we will yield heart and will and conscience to Him, quite honestly; and not only in us, but with us, "for the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up to everlasting life."

X

FAITH AND SCIENCE *

“Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.”—PHIL. ii. 12, 13.

YOU may divide the world into three classes. In the first place, there are those who are looking for physical, moral, and social salvation, solely to human effort. They are in all probability less numerous than they were, but still they exist in large numbers to-day. We know the type well: the keen and earnest scientist, who is often most unselfish in his work, and most self-denying in his pursuit of knowledge, but who trusts entirely for the improvement of the condition of mankind to the increase of that knowledge, who regards prayer as waste of time, and is conscientiously unable to look beyond the actual task to be done in the immediate present to any Supreme Being who is asserted by others to be behind the phenomena which he sees. Then, in contradistinction to a man like this, we have the man who grows impatient when he hears about

* Preached before the Public Health Congress in St. Paul's Cathedral, June, 1905.

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the laws of Nature at all. "Is it to be supposed for a moment," he asks, "that God cannot cure any evil or disease directly, without recourse to any intermediate method or means? It is impossible to believe," he says—although, to be quite fair, it is generally in my experience a woman who says it—"that if God is good and just, He would allow disease or death to exist in the world for a moment. God works out His own will; disease and pain and infirmity exist only in our imagination. If we had only more faith, without employing secondary causes, or using means to ends, disease, misery, death, would vanish away, and all would be perfect in the best of all possible worlds. 'Work out your own salvation!' It is the last thing you have to do," such a one would say. "Stand still, and see the salvation of God."

But in addition to these two classes, there is a third class, who see nothing inconsistent in combining both ideas. Just as in their spiritual lives they work their hardest by moral effort, by bringing their will-power to bear upon their tempers, by watching where they oftenest fall, and avoiding temptation, and yet look to God all the time to give them His grace, to work His will in them, to back up their puny effort, and to give them the much-needed pull as they spring upward for the next step, so in their social effort will they investigate and learn and study. They look to God, whose lesson-book they feel

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they are slowly spelling out with faltering accents letter by letter; they work out their own salvation and that of others with trembling hope, just because "it is GOD that worketh in them, both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

And is there anything inconsistent in their doing so? Have not the greatest discoverers felt that they were picking up pebbles on the shore of the ocean of truth? Have not the most carefully accurate scientific men been the humblest in their estimate of what they really know of the mystery of life, and bowed themselves before a mysterious Power which seemed all the more wonderful in its working the more they studied it? Can we forget the deep reverence of a Newton, a Herschel, and a Stokes, and do we not feel instinctively that those men who dogmatically lay down the law to-day as to what is or what is not possible are lesser men, are, rather, as a leading Cambridge scientist has said, "the camp-followers of science," than scientific men themselves? The great men of the world always have been so reverent, so conscious of the greatness of their work, and the possibility of just doing their little bit in their lifetime, and then leaving it to others who come after. As the poet Browning says—

"That low man seeks a little thing to do,
Sees it and does it.
This high man, with a great thing to pursue,
Dies ere he knows it."

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And if it is not inconsistent for a great scientific man to be religious, still less it is inconsistent for the most devout man in the world to be enthusiastically scientific. I believe that it is still a popular idea that the clergy and other religious men are opposed to science, and live in the midst of such transcendental ideas that drainage and insanitary dwellings and infant mortality are beyond their ken. All I can say is this: that in my experience in the slums of London—and anyone who knows the real life of the slums would tell you the same—the man who side by side with the doctor and the sanitary inspector is fighting the slum-owner, rescuing the children, and denouncing insanitary areas, is the slum parson. How many times have I myself, as Rector of Bethnal Green, been round with the Sanitary Committee of the Vestry, looking into every corner of the great parish, climbing up narrow staircases, examining the condition in which the child not only eats, but sleeps; and, far beyond any little effort I was able myself to make in past days, who has been for years a more fearless exposé of every kind of insanitary iniquity in East London than the Rector of Spitalfields, or Canon Barnett, or, in South London, the Vicar of St. Peter's, Walworth? No body of men have more enthusiastically ranged themselves with you and your Congress than those who have been or now are the slum

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clergy of our great city, not because they do not believe in GOD, but because they do; because they believe that it is not the will of the great FATHER in Heaven that any of these little ones should perish; because they believe that when some little child dies of scarlet fever from a preventable cause it is not directly the will of GOD at all, but the work of the devil; that while GOD allows it to happen (just as He allows for the present all perverted free-will to work out its mischief, because to destroy the free-will of man would be to break His image in Him), yet all the time He is on our side, and we are on His side, as, in the name of righteousness and cleanliness and godliness, we destroy the works of the devil.

And to illustrate my point, let us take four subjects only. How do you, who are scientists, propose to deal with infant mortality, the housing question, with which it is so closely allied, certain classes of disease closely connected with immorality, and the cause of nine-tenths of the crime of the country—the drink question? You will find at each turn not only that you will want us, as we shall certainly want you, but that both of us together will be helpless without GOD.

For instance, we set about discovering the causes of infant mortality. You will earn the undying thanks of us all by telling us more precisely the care to be taken with the milk-supply, and what is to be avoided in house-building, as

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you have already pointed out to us the evils of back-to-back houses. But still, if the Report on Physical Deterioration is right in its figures, the mortality of infants, which was 154 per 1,000 forty years ago, remains at the same figure to-day. But a number of diseases which attack children, as the Bishop of Ripon pointed out in the House of Lords, have been greatly diminished, and there ought therefore to be among boys in the town districts 28 lives per 1,000 more saved, and 23 per 1,000 among girls. The annual waste of child-life appears still to be in this country alone 140,000 a year.

Now, I feel absolutely certain that in attacking this gigantic evil, when we have discovered and remedied every physical cause, we shall find that more than half, probably three-fourths, of it is due to moral causes ; that many deaths are due to the avarice or carelessness of those who take money for property without keeping it in a sanitary condition, from the drunken habits of those who overlay their children, from the immorality of men and women who have broken the laws of God ; and, therefore, you will need the moral help of all religious people of every denomination who can strengthen and reinforce character. But, further than that, we shall discover as we go on that all that any of us can do is to come back, and bring others back, to the primeval laws of God, "without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy"

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—the primeval laws which are the foundation of the world's health, as they are the secret of its happiness: "Thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." In other words, our only hope is to bring back the world under the rule of God.

Or take the housing question. We are all agreed as to the advisability of garden cities. But at Hampstead we have a garden city ready planned, the land offered at a moderate price, and everything waiting—waiting, what for? For the Congress on Public Health? Not at all. No one would be better pleased than the Congress would be if it could give the garden city to us. No! Waiting for the rich really to care how the poor live—to care enough to run the very moderate risk of investing their money in what might at first bring an interest not so great as in other enterprises, but which would have an immediate interest in human lives and human happiness, which no gold can buy.

And who is to give this love of others, this true Christian charity, but God alone? And who is to bring home the love of God but those who minister to the rich in holy things, and have their confidence, and speak to their soul? And it is here where the Church of the West can help so truly the Church of the East and the Sanitary Congress, in spreading the kingdom of God, which should at least comprise for every living child of God "the common liberty of earth and air."

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Or when we glance—and I cannot do more than glance—at the physical effects of certain breaches of the moral law, so terribly familiar to those of us who have spent years in the rescue and preventive works of our great cities, do we not all know that not all the sanitary laws in the world can by themselves alter character ; that as a matter of fact, the character of JESUS CHRIST and the ideal He set the world, as the historian Lecky said, has done more to regenerate mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers and all the plans of statesmen ; and that if all the world obeyed the royal law, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see GOD,” it would do more to abolish certain forms of disease than all the Public Health Congresses that will ever be held ?

And so with the drink question. We are told, not by so-called temperance fanatics, but by cool-headed magistrates, that nine-tenths of the crime of the country is due to drink. And no one can know better than the learned and experienced men who attend the Public Health Congress the physical effects of drunkenness and the effect which it leaves, not only upon children, but upon children's children.

But how are we going to cure it? You can always do something by legislation ; and no one has urged legislation on certain points more than the various Christian bodies in the country. But when it comes to the real cure, nothing but the grace of GOD can change a man's inner nature ;

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nothing but the love of CHRIST can give the Divine patience to bear with a drunken man or woman until they are reformed ; nothing but the power of the HOLY SPIRIT can really plant in any heart the virtue of self-control.

We come round, then, to the point from which we started. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is GOD that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Study on, investigate on ; scrutinise every opening, follow up every clue. GOD trains our intelligence and our character while making us find out His gift for ourselves. There is the coal, and we must mine for it. There is the electricity, but we must discover it and learn its laws. There is the radium, and we must learn its properties. Everything that happens spurs us on. Railway accidents make us work till we find the best brake. Epidemics occur till we discover vaccination ; cholera will go on till we detect the germ ; deaths from cancer will wring our hearts till we discover the cure. But all the time GOD thought these thoughts long before. The gifts were there, waiting for our work, ready to our hand. We are fellow-workers with GOD, who all the time was working before we were born, and will still be working when we pass away. And our work is only permanent and effective because behind all the human workers in the world "it is GOD that worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

XI

APATHY*

[N my Visitation Questions to the clergy I asked, amongst other things, "What is your chief difficulty?" and the answer over and over again has been, "Not opposition, but indifference—apathy." I believe apathy to be one of the greatest hindrances to the progress of the Church to-day.

But notice that, as a rule, Englishmen are not apathetic or indifferent. For instance, I attended not long ago a great football match—England v. Scotland—and found myself wedged in amongst five hundred Scotchmen. Of course, I shouted "England!" at the top of my voice, and the five hundred Scotchies shouted "Scotland!" But amongst all the men present, there was no apathy or indifference.

Or, again, I had the great honour and privilege, when Bishop of Stepney, of welcoming in St.

* Address at the Men's Meeting of the Church Congress at Weymouth, October, 1905.

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Paul's Cathedral the C.I.V.'s when they returned from the South African War. When the City Imperial Volunteers got into the Cathedral, four hours late, having accomplished one of the most difficult marches of all—the march from Charing Cross to St. Paul's—they fanned themselves with their hymn-papers after the exertion of getting through the crowd, but they were not apathetic, nor was there any apathy at the time amongst the men of England.

So, again, in the fog one winter, in the almost utter darkness, a poor girl fell from a platform on a suburban railway into the very path of a train, and a humble clerk in the City, without a moment's hesitation, jumped down, and held the girl closely to the ground till the train passed safely over both. There was no apathy about that. Nor is it an isolated case. Here is another, which has not got into the papers. A friend of my own, an undergraduate at Oxford, told me that, being short-sighted, he fell over the platform, and three men, with their little City bags, who were standing there, immediately jumped down and saved him.

And, for a fourth illustration, I might refer to the shooting of the Hull fishermen by the Russian fleet. I remember no week when there was such self-restraint, and yet such passionate anger, as at that time. It was felt that a great wrong had been done, and that a stain lay on the nation's

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honour until that wrong was righted. We were not apathetic, but we were self-restrained.

On all such matters there is no apathy at all amongst Englishmen. Therefore if there is apathy about religion it means that Englishmen think that none of these emotions need be or should be stirred by religion.

Now, my contention to-night is that all these emotions are stirred by the cause for which the Church is fighting, if you understand it rightly.

1. First of all, is there or is there not a great battle ever going on before our eyes, possessing an interest to which 20,000 or 30,000 football matches are as nothing? I see life on a very large scale in London. I see one of your daughters coming up from the country into London. She is surrounded by dangers of which you, perhaps, know nothing. Is it a matter of indifference to me or to you that, as she comes up from the country station into London, she shall not meet some false friend who shall lure her away under the pretence of friendship into some horrible house of ill-fame? It is everything to me that the Church should be there to protect her. It is everything to me that there shall be a friend there in her hour of need, who shall give her the right assistance, and at the right time, and save her from the devices of sin. Perhaps you do not know we guard every railway-station in London. We watch and guard these

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young people, so that the devils who try to tempt their innocence may be defeated.

Or, again, I watch a life in some great factory or workshop, such as you have in the great torpedo works here in Weymouth. I see some boy whom I have known from a little innocent child. I see him go out into the great world of London for the first time. Is it nothing to me or to you that when he gets into a great workshop he shall not be led away by some of the elder men, and taught to bet and gamble, and cheat and drink? I say, if it is nothing to you, your manhood is worth nothing. It should be everything to you and me that the issue of the great battle which ever goes on for the soul of that boy should be on the right side, and that the Church, as she goes forward in her glorious effort for the soul of that boy, shall win, and not be defeated.

Or, again—for, after all, preventive work is better than rescue—as girls pour into London from the suburbs every day, is it nothing to you or to me whether for a few hours—the time of waiting between the last cheap train and their work—they should be on the streets of London or under some protecting roof? They throng the churches all round the great stations. There they sit, going on with their reading, out of harm's way. There is a short service every morning, and they find there shelter during the

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waiting hours under the protection of the old Church of England.

Or, again, is it nothing to us that when some poor man lies dying in a garret in East London, someone shall go down there, as the poor man wants to get some little comfort before he dies, and help him to tell out his sins to GOD, and speak to him of pardon and a heavenly home? Is it nothing whether a man shall die like a dog in a Christian country? I saw two just before death who might have done so. I remember, about fifteen years ago, going almost by chance into a house, and finding there a dying lad. "Have you ever said a prayer, my lad?" I asked. "No." "Or been baptized?" "No." "Or used to going to church or chapel?" "No." I only had about ten minutes to speak to him. And when I think that GOD meant that boy to have been baptized in infancy, brought up in a Christian school, confirmed, and, if he had to die, to die helped by the comfort and strength of the Holy Communion, I say it is everything to me, and ought to be to you, that the Church shall not be outpaced in her ministry by the increase of population, and that every one of these souls should have the comfort which CHRIST meant them to have before they die.

And therefore I say a battle is going on that fills me with ten times the emotion that all football matches ever roused, keen as I have always been on games. I say that thousands of the souls of

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GOD's people are at stake, and if you really weigh the matter you will feel the same.

2. Or turn to the C.I.V.'s. Can I show the slightest possible ground for supposing that there is a call as really addressed to you as the call which brought these young fellows from their stools and benches, and sent them away to South Africa? We, the officers, cannot win this battle without the rank and file—the soldiers. It is you who are there before me, you elder men in the works, upon whom the victory depends. Anyone who has the courage of his opinions, anyone who will not hear filthy language without protest, anyone who says, "I don't mind saying that I go to church, and mean it"; "I say my prayers, and mean to"—it is you who are to win the battle. We will do our best to lead you in the struggle, but the victory is impossible without the men.

I should like to tell you of a few organisations which train men for service. In the first place, there is an institution in Stepney called the Church Training College for Lay Workers. I am an officer of that institution, and I have seen in that training college men from every part of England, whom GOD has called to dedicate their lives to His service. Well, we all want training; and in that college any young fellow from any part of the country, willing to give up his present work and devote himself to the service of GOD in His Church, can be received and trained.

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The grand old Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, which has been called "the handy-man" of the Church, pays the expenses of those who cannot pay for themselves, and £15 a year is charged to the others. So if there are only one or two here who can say, "I would rather give up my good job, and go and work for God and His Church," there is the place where you can be trained.

Then, there is the Church of England Men's Society. What we want to have in every part of the country is a branch of that society, where the men of the place join together in one body, arranging to follow certain simple rules of daily prayers and going to church, keeping from bad language and gambling, and so form a nucleus which shall try to work among their fellows. It carries out the principle of St. Andrew's Brotherhood, that when a man is converted he should win his brother.

3. And, again, is there nothing in our religion that stirs the emotion and will like that act of self-sacrifice of which I spoke, of the young man who offered his life to save the girl who fell from the railway-platform?

Here, indeed, I must speak with bated breath. When I speak of the sacrifice of my Saviour, I feel that that sacrifice is something so tremendous and so awful that one hardly knows what words to choose. But I stand here as a Christian man, ordained because at last I believed it after years of

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doubt, to asseverate this : I do believe with all my soul that the SON of GOD came down on earth, and did that very act of self-sacrifice upon the cross. And I say, the thing is so tremendous that when I believe it my life cannot be the same.

And my further word, then, to you is—come back out of the tyranny of those sceptical friends who try to persuade you that the Christian religion is played out. The New Testament has had fifty years of criticism, and all who know will admit that it stands ten times as strong as it did fifty years ago.

I have had to argue these things time after time in the open air and in great lecture-halls, and I remember that, so far from finding apathy, one day, when I was arguing with an opponent, and said, "I will admit this," a man in the audience cried out : "Admit nothing." I say that to show you that it is not for want of thinking or hearing the other side that I believe in the Cross now with all my soul. And I believe that now, having tested all the evidence, we touch that great fact of the world in a way we never did before. The question is: What difference does it make to your life? When your short passing-time on earth is over, the Person before whom you will stand is one who still has the marks of the cross on His glorified body. His first question will be: "How did My death affect you? What difference did it make in your life?" And I put it to you whether it would not be better to have to say, "It was so tremendous that

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I could not believe it," than to have to say, "Oh yes, I believed it, but I forgot, and it made no difference; I was so busy about my work, I was so interested in what was in the newspapers, that I forgot all about Thy death on the cross."

Now, the Church of CHRIST comes to you this week to ask this question in CHRIST's name: "Is it nothing to you? Is it nothing to all you who pass by? Behold, and see if there was any sorrow like unto My sorrow." And I ask you to think over that question, and pray over it, and to see if you cannot make this resolution: "Please God, I shall never forget, and shall bring my sins to be forgiven at the foot of the Cross; I shall take up that Cross, and follow CHRIST for ever."

4. And now my last point is this: Is there nothing which answers to that emotion which we felt when we heard that the Hull fishermen had been shot? When I hear people speak of the grand old Church of England to which we belong as if its work was done; as if there was such party spirit in it that it would fall apart; as if, instead of being the grand thing it is, it had no care about the children of England, I feel a shame when these things are said. There are some of us who are going to prevent such things from happening, and we look to you to help us. Remember the song:

"And shall Trelawney die?
Then twenty thousand Cornishmen
Will know the reason why."

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When people speak about destroying the grand old Church of England, I should like to be able to answer, "There are twenty thousand Dorset men will know the reason why."

I give you, then, this call of the Church of CHRIST. If the Church Congress makes one of you leap forward and take some service, as the C.I.V.'s leaped forward; if it makes you say that there cannot be such a battle and you not join in it; if it makes you feel a sense of gratitude to CHRIST, and a great pride in work for His Church—then the Congress will not have been held in vain.

XII

FAITH AS A GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED *

“Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place ; and it shall remove ; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.”—ST. MATT. xvii. 20.

I ALWAYS feel that no sermon in the year, many as I have to preach, compares with that which I preach at Oxford at the special services for undergraduates in the University Church. I look back for many years, and out of each year this sight always stands out in my memory. It is a rather touching thing, for instance, to me to be able to say that at my last ordination there were five men ordained in St. Paul's Cathedral who made up their minds to be ordained in this very church, in answer to the question which I asked here five years ago, “Why should I not be ordained?” and although that is not my subject now, I cannot forbear saying this: that all the reasons I stated five years ago are the same to-

* Preached to the Undergraduates of Oxford, in St. Mary's Church, Oxford, October 29th, 1905.

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night. The objective call, the awful need, the sight of clergy breaking down from sheer overwork because they have no helpers, the voice from God, "Whom shall I send?" which blends with the voice from humanity, "Whom wilt Thou send? who will come to us?" the overcrowded nature of every profession but one—all these are equally truths to-day.

When I prayed as to what should be my message, I was guided to this verse, which had been haunting me for many weeks. It is always a good plan if you want to preach a sermon to other people's souls to preach it to your own first, and choose that message for them which you find in your work is most full of encouragement to you. And, therefore, I take this promise of the Saviour's, which has three glorious notes in it, and which comforts me as I go on from day to day and week after week in my awful task. The words are these: "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say to this mountain, Remove, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." Now, the first thing which it tells me is the extraordinary value of even a little faith. I am always so afraid, as you come up to Oxford from the public schools to face, as you have often to face, doubts and difficulties you have never known before, lest you should despise that little mustard seed of faith which you bring with you. As I look over your future and see you going

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forth from Oxford and out into the battle of life, I know that the one thing you have brought here to church which is of ten times the value of your intellectual power and your social qualities is that mustard seed of faith ; because as I see a world that is full of people dying every day and night, and full of temptations which perhaps are hard to realise, I know that your usefulness to that world all depends upon whether that mustard seed of faith is lost, or whether you are putting it to good use in this tempted, and suffering, and dying world. It is one of those things driven home by experience of life. Why, out of a nursing-home, is one nurse always sent for? You find, on inquiry, it is the one that has most faith. Why do I find in our great hospitals there is one man amongst medical students standing out in his influence over all the others, to whom they go in their troubles and difficulties? It is the one that has faith. And whom do I find the most useless person in this world? It is the man, perhaps twenty years older, to whom people go and find nothing to cling to, no moral strength, and no comfort that he can give them. That is the man I pray God you may not become. It is your little mustard seed of faith which your mother planted in you when she taught you your prayers at her knee, which was fostered in the good school from which you came, which went on growing little by little until your Confir-

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mation time, was then nourished by reverent Communion—that thing which seems so small to you is the most precious thing you have got, and for God's sake do not despise it. Sometimes we let some sceptical friend steal it away by a sharp and clever argument, not realising what we lose. My first word to you—before I tell what may happen to it, how to nourish it, or what to do with it—is to guard it as the most precious thing you have got. If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, do not despise it.

And the second thing revealed in this promise by our Saviour is even more wonderful than the first, and the truth of it is proved by life. When one comes down like this, some twenty or twenty-five years older than most of you, what always seems to me is this: that what we are bound to do, speaking as man to man, is to pass on what we have learnt in these twenty-five years, being quite as ignorant about it when we sat on those benches as you are to-night. And what is it? The certainty of the second promise of the Saviour that the mustard seed does grow. It is an extraordinary thing. I am sure I could not tell you how I grew out of those haunting doubts I had at Oxford; and when a clever man, well known to you, who was speaking to the candidates at a London ordination, said, "I would not take back the warm feelings of my boyhood in exchange for the solid certainty of to-day," I do not suppose

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that he could explain how it became the "solid certainty." But it is plain that the mustard seed, if you do not lose it, does, by some extraordinary process which no one can explain to another, grow. I look back twenty years to my ordination. I know that I believe twenty times as strongly as I did then, but I could not tell you why. I know that nothing, no argument in the world, could convince me that GOD does not answer prayer. I know He has answered prayer; and therefore I want you to look forward to the mustard seed of faith, which seems so despicable at present, growing into something under which the birds of the air shall come and take their rest. In the unknown future—known to GOD—there are twenty, fifty, eighty, a hundred, perhaps a thousand souls who will one day shelter under your faith. I call that a glorious hope.

And then the third truth is—and we shall come back in a moment to ask how this faith is to grow—the extraordinary power of faith in the world, when it is genuine. I remember when I was a boy I used to think that this phrase was exaggerated; it seemed incredible that if I had faith as a grain of mustard seed I could say to a mountain, "Remove," and it should be done. I hardly dared to admit it, even to myself, but it seemed an exaggerated thing to say. But what do you see when you look round the world? Is it not exactly what is happening? I see a man with no very brilliant

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intellect, filled with faith, go down to some mission district where there is a perfect mountain of prejudice, paganism, and indifference. It seems a slight thing to go down—just this man with his faith. I go there five or ten years afterwards, and find the church crowded to the doors, and round him a warm-hearted, enthusiastic band of people, some of the public-houses shut up, and the moral tone of the whole place changed. How has it been done? Simply and solely by his faith. Faith has removed mountains; he has thrown himself upon GOD—GOD has answered to the call. He has gone in the name of JESUS CHRIST, and the LORD has been working with him, and therefore what has happened is that his faith has removed mountains, as was promised. Again, I have seen faith entirely remove dread of suffering. I remember a little child whom I first heard cry in pain when I was in Belgium. I went to see what it was, and found her being operated upon in order to try to save her life. She was about thirteen. I had her brought to London, and called in the best specialists to see her. They said she must lie perfectly motionless for two years. Now, this is the extraordinary thing: when I took her into my room to break to her—full of life and happiness as she was, and enjoying herself with all the joy of a child—that she was to lie motionless for two years at least, this is what she said (and she had never

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spoken about religion to me at all before): "It is an honour, Bishop, to share God's pain." All these eighteen months has she laid upon her bed, and the whole time, in spite of pain, suffering, discomfort, she has never uttered one single word of complaint. A short time ago, after two convulsions, she suddenly passed to her rest. I shall always say this: that in the perfect faith of that child I saw a triumph of faith which will be a lesson to me for life. Little letters used to come from her—I had one half finished soon after her death—they were quite simple letters, with little about religion in them, but simple tokens of the faith which was in her—faith which had been planted and which grew in her, and which simply conquered her suffering. Again, I have seen in the East of London a woman, who lay for twenty years in constant pain, carried back from her Communion on Christmas Day, her face shining with happiness. I have been with a brother Bishop two days before he died—and he knew he was dying—and he spoke as brightly, happily, cheerily, awaiting his end as if he were going to walk into the next room. I have seen one of the richest men in the city of London, whom I know to have built ten churches, lead a perfectly simple life, administering his great wealth like a child, and as simply a steward of what he had. I have seen him by his faith conquering the world which appeared to have lost its power to make him selfish. I have

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seen boys come up to London and live in lonely lodgings beset with ten thousand times the temptations which you have, and I have seen them live as pure lives as any woman, because their faith held down the passions and the instincts of their bodies. Now, this proves my third point—that not only is faith of value as a mustard seed, not only does it certainly grow, but of all the powers in the world to-day, faith is the one which alone can remove mountains.

Then comes the question, How can that mustard seed of faith in your heart—almost, perhaps, being lost because you are in a state of doubt and difficulty—how can that be fostered into a tree under which others shall take refuge? First of all, it depends upon yourselves. You can let it be lost out of your heart by sheer neglect. For instance, when a boy comes up from a public school to Oxford and gives up his prayers, just keeps a few chapels because he is obliged, leaves his Bible unopened, gives up the Communion to which he went at his school, no outside person can prevent that boy losing the mustard seed of faith; he is losing the most precious thing he has got, and he is doing it from sheer slackness. I speak like this because my heart goes out to you when I come down like this once a year, and I want to lose no chance of helping you for want of a word of warning. Think what you are doing in pure slackness. You are defeating God. God

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cannot make the seed grow if you push it out of your heart.

Then comes drunkenness. I am afraid that we are seeing in Oxford one of those waves which sometimes pass over now this part of it, now another. I have watched for many years life at Oxford. It does not come in each college at the same time, but it is found in one college, perhaps, and then in another. There are many in every college who always do their best to try and fight against it, but I am certain from the evidence before me, that in certain colleges to-day there is a wave of drunkenness. I have had instances brought before me, which I am perfectly certain are true ones, where men have called on freshmen within a day or two of their coming to Oxford and demanded drinks from them, and if they have not given them, they have not only broken up the furniture in the room, but ill-treated the men themselves. I find that even at some—what are called “quiet”—colleges we are too much accustomed to-day to what was certainly a rare sight when I was here twenty-five years ago—two or three drunken men coming out of what I cannot help thinking have been misguidedly called “drunks.” It is a new name. I see the result of this in London when I tell you that I have at this moment at least twenty University* men hopeless drunkards on my hands, and one of the worst is a man who was a 'Varsity

* Not all Oxford men by any means.

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cox. This thing which we look on apparently with so light a heart means deadly ruin to numbers in the days to come. I ask, Is it likely that the mustard seed of faith will grow if we take a low or light view of such a thing as that? I cannot tell you how old Oxford men, working for temperance in a place like East London, are disheartened by it. I was speaking a few days ago in the People's Palace, and I said that what we are hoping for is that in their class in East London the public opinion about drinking would change as it had in our class, but I little knew then of what I was speaking. I said that there is no man in the West End of London who would be asked to dinner again if he were once seen drunk at dinner—nor would he—and some day, I added, there will come this change—that there will be no working man who will allow his wife to be disgraced by the sight of drunkenness in her home. When I considered from what quarter I could get workers to bring about this state of things, Oxford was uppermost in my mind. I simply say that if this is to be the standard of Oxford, we are poisoning the wells with a vengeance. Why, it is to you we look to come down and help us to reform East London, and there is nothing which cuts underneath the trust and hope of those who have hard enough work to keep up hope already than to think Oxford is going to fail us. I do not care from what college you come, but I say let men who

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know that there is anything of this sort in their college go back and have the moral pluck to say "I will remove this mountain, this incubus of drunkenness; it shall not happen in our college." They may have done so. I know some colleges where that has been done, and things are better than they were four or five years ago. If ever there was a promise which applied to such an effort as this it is the text of to-night. If a few in every college have the grain of mustard seed, you shall say to this gigantic evil, "Begone!" and nothing shall be impossible. Do not be afraid if the offender is a man who is the most popular or the most athletic man in the college—as a matter of fact, it is not the leading athletes who do these things—but whether he is a popular man or not, work together, and you will "remove this mountain" from your college.

And then you may lose the seed of faith—but I cannot speak of that now—through ordinary secularism and doubts, which easily beset us at an age like yours. But what I would finish with now is that while in these ways you may lose the seed, the main question is how you can make it grow. How are you who are not doubters, not secularists, who hate drunkenness as much as any of us—how are you to make the little mustard seed of faith of which you are possessed grow into a tree that will cover thousands in the days to come? First of all, keep it in the good ground. The seed is

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put in the good ground. The Church of God is good ground, and therefore keep true to the Church or to whatever Christian body you belong ; keep the seed in the good ground where there is an atmosphere of religion to make it grow, choosing for your friends those who really will help you with your higher life. That is one great way ; if you ask, for instance, how a seed does spring and grow, you are told that there is some chemical power in the ground which grasps that seed and makes it grow, and therefore the first secret is to keep the seed in good ground. Secondly, it wants rain. I hope there is not a single one of you who has given up his morning prayers. If there is, that is the first step to prevent the mustard seed from growing at all. We have had prayers throughout the Church for a revival. Do have a revival in Oxford, however quietly you do it—through your union, through the chapel services—have a revival of the belief in the power of prayer. No one can doubt, if they have perseveringly tried, that grace is poured down from Heaven when we pray.

Then, lastly, do not forget the sunshine ; for, after all, it is the sun that expands the seed best of all. Whether it is mustard seed or seed of corn, it must have sunshine. If you believe that when you kneel at your prayers you have the love of God shining down upon you just as the sunshine falls on you from the window on a bright morning ; that God owns you and

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created you, and claims you, whether you are ordained or not ; that you are the person whom He wants to use for His service ; and that He loves you with an everlasting love—then you will keep yourselves in the love of God. And so I leave my message with you. The faith, even if it be only as a grain of mustard seed, is not wholly lost from any heart among you yet. Cherish it ; use the means of making it grow ; ask what your life is going to be in the future ; how you are going to use it so that other people will bless God that you are alive. If you keep yourself in the love of God, and use the sunshine and the rain and the mysterious chemistry of the good ground, it shall grow more and more until you hardly know it in the days to come, when people will come and shelter under it, and both for you and for others it shall spring up to eternal life.

XIII

THE VOCATION OF THE LAYMAN IN THE CHURCH*

THE subject I have been asked to take in Cambridge is "The Vocation of the Layman in the Church." First of all, let me sketch to you the field of work open to a layman in the Church. I read recently a book which made a great impression on me. That book gives a perfectly true picture—I know it is true, because I have been the chairman of the rescue work of London for something like ten years—of what is going on in thousands of instances in London to-day: the cruel downfall of a good, innocent girl, to die the worst of deaths in five years. I try to keep my heart up against the problems of London, but there is always that thought between me and my night's rest. I know that even as I speak there are so many thousands of girls who have been trodden down into the mud of the streets. It is a terrible thought. I

* Address to Cambridge Undergraduates, in the Corn Exchange, Cambridge, October, 1905.

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know from our rescue workers that these girls go out with a kind of hunted look. And when I ask why God does not do something, why He does not open the heavens and come down, why He does not do something to help those poor souls, the answer is that He is waiting for someone. I will tell you in a moment for whom He is waiting.

Here is another picture : I see thousands who were good, honest lads until they left Sunday-school, but went afterwards to the bad, betting, gambling, taking to drink, because they have nowhere except the streets in which to play. I remember one coming to me, his face pale as death, and—what was rare with a London boy, because as a class they are so reserved, and in a way so unemotional—he flung himself on his knees and caught hold of me. I said : “Well, lad, what is the matter?” “Oh,” he said, “Mr. Ingram, do help me !” The boy’s story was a common one ; it is repeated over and over again in London. He had “chucked” his club, and was drawn into the public-house by someone for a drink. There he had been induced to put his money on horses which were “going to make his fortune,” and that night he came to me with terror in his eyes to say that he had lost nine pounds from the shop club, the money of which had been trusted to him by his shopmates. Of course, I lent him the money. That is but one picture of what is going on, not only in London, but through

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all the great towns of England. Betting and gambling are ruining more than drink. And when I ask myself, "What is God doing?" I know He is waiting for someone.

Turning to another part of the life of great cities, I see there a perfect whirl of suffering. In London alone someone dies every eight minutes, day and night; and if you had seen as many of those deathbeds as I have been called upon to witness, you would have the sight often before your eyes. Again I ask myself: "What is God doing?" I know that He sent His SON down into the thick of the suffering to share it and bear it with us. But what is He waiting for that He may comfort these individual sufferers as they lie dying? He is waiting for someone to come and help Him.

Or I turn my attention to the sight which was the last I saw in London before coming here. I was almost late in arriving at Cambridge, because I had to drive for a mile past the unemployed. Never shall I forget their faces. The spirit seemed to have died out of most of them. I am not going to argue the question as to what is wise and what is unwise. I would only say that probably this will be a larger problem in future, and I wonder on whom God is counting and for whom is He looking in this work. He is waiting for someone whom He has commissioned, someone whom He trusts to do the work.

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Again, I was in Victoria Park for years every Sunday afternoon. I looked at the stand, where the lecturer was explaining that there was no God, that CHRIST was a myth, that the Bible was a pack of lies ; and I saw the boys clapping their hands. It is a very generous percentage which allows that one in ten of the population attends a church or chapel, and I wonder what God is going to do in face of so much unbelief. I ask myself what is God's plan, what He is looking for, and I feel perfectly certain that He is looking for someone to realise his vocation and come to His help.

I look at another branch of life to-day, and see young life pouring into the army. My thoughts travel to the time when, many years ago, as the guest of a regiment, I attended an early Communion service, and found two only out of the whole regiment were present. And when I ask whom God is looking to to keep the life of the army religious, to keep the younger soldiers, when they go out to India, from the terrible sins which bring on such fearful diseases, I know perfectly well that God is not going to do it Himself. He is looking for someone among the officers of the army to take a firm, clear stand, and He means to do His work through him. Or take the Indian Civil Service. Who is going to that lonely station to keep religion and the religious standard in the heart of the place when everything tends to break it down ? Who is going to prevent the officials

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depressing the missionaries, as they can do in a place like India? There, again, God is looking for someone to help Him.

That brings me to who that "someone" is. I am speaking to you from the deepest conviction of my heart when I say that to the laymen in the Church God is looking to do His work in every one of those fields. When you look upon those poor hunted women, it is you whom God expects to rise as one man and say, "This thing shall not continue for ever a disgrace to London." He is looking to the young men of Oxford and Cambridge to help Him.

The truth, I feel perfectly certain, which the very best of you do not yet realise is that the layman in the Church is a sacred, a holy person. Do you realise that when you kneel for Confirmation you are consecrated for service, and that the standard of a layman should be as high as that of an ordained person? I challenge you to find any passage of Holy Scripture or any teaching of the Church which draws the slightest line between the standard of the layman and that of the ordained in the Church. There is a difference in function; there is no difference whatever in standard. Jesus Himself is the only Priest, and in the New Testament the whole Church is called His body. Those who are ordained priests are organs of that body, through which the body acts.* Realise

* See Canon Moberly's "Ministerial Priesthood."

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then your position as members, whether lay or ordained, of the Church. In either case you are absolutely bound before Heaven and earth to exercise your priesthood, and as God looks down on all the evils in the world, it is on His young lay priests that His eye is fixed to remedy them.

How are you to fight these frightful evils? What are you to do with regard to the first of them? I ask all you Cambridge men, all anointed priests in the lay priesthood of the Church, to swear before God on your knees, when you get home, that you will never tamper, either by thought, if you can help it, or even less in suggestion, with the fearful sin which is damning the souls of thousands. But more than that: you are expected to form public opinion on the matter. In my house at Amen Court I used to have forty men, of various professions, who met once a month for the purpose of spreading a sound public opinion on this matter where they lived and worked. Something can be done in this way with the young fellows who come to London for business. We must unite them to form a public opinion which will break down that debased public opinion which is at the bottom of the whole matter. Cannot you do something? One woman alone has saved a thousand girls in Piccadilly. Meanwhile, the men have been carrying on a campaign among the youths of London. The Bishop of Stepney

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and I have held meetings in the different boroughs, and agents are at work in the business houses to help the boys in their tempted lives. Lately there has been opened an institution for the young men of London which is called Ingram House, where one hundred and sixty young men, coming to London to work in banks and offices, can live a happy Englishman's life, away from the lonely lodgings which are the curse of the day. I know I do not ask in vain that every Cambridge man will stand by them in this matter. See that boys do not hear filthy things in your presence, particularly from their elders, who ought to be ashamed of themselves. Whatever you do, I ask you to help me with that terrible problem which faces the Bishop of Southwark and myself day and night.

With regard to the evil of gambling, I ask you to back up your own college missions in South London, and especially Cambridge House. I shall never forget my nine years at Oxford House. Surely the sister University might back up their splendid workers by raising a similar building, with the arms of Cambridge emblazoned on it and the motto of Cambridge University. Either in conjunction with the college missions or your old school missions, you could go down to the slums, rescue the boys from the streets, teach them manly games, and infuse into them something like the public school spirit. If only you

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give the London boys a chance, you will find them the most splendid material in the world ; and, in speaking of London, I would include Manchester, Liverpool, and all the other towns to which your business life may lead you. I could put my hand on five hundred young fellows whom I used to know, and who, through the work of one boys' club alone, have become sober, steady, respectable young Englishmen. If one club can do that, what would be the effect of hundreds of such efforts? How can a lay priest exercise his priesthood in a more natural way than by doing something for those whom he ought to protect?

Then, again, men are wanted who know why they believe, and they would be able to save those poor boys from believing the rubbish which they are often taught. Following a recent example, I should like to give certificates to trained laymen who are willing to strike a blow for the Faith in districts such as I have described. To whom else can we look to see that religion is not stamped out by the influences which surround it? So again in the army. I want to see fifty to a hundred men in each regiment walking up to the Holy Communion to set the others an example. I want to know that at every hill-station in India there are young priests carrying on their lay priesthood by a life of brave and consistent Christian witness.

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Are you proud of belonging to the Church of England? Do you understand in the least what the Church is? I did not when I was your age, and so I can honestly say that I expect that half of you do not. I feel now an enthusiastic love of the Church of England, because I believe that it is an integral branch of the Catholic Church of JESUS CHRIST. I used to believe that the Church was not in the Bible. But I asked myself why JESUS CHRIST took His disciples away to teach them, why He said with joy, "Upon this rock will I build My Church," why He prayed that they all might be one. Much of the New Testament is devoted to the founding and instructing and sending forth of that great Divine Society we call the Church. Because I know that our Church is a part of the Divine Society which CHRIST founded, I am proud of it. It breathes the spirit dear to all Englishmen—the spirit of freedom. As a member of the Church of England, I do not feel in bondage to a system; I feel that I am under fatherly authority.* The Church is closely intertwined with the country, and I find that it is the silent, quiet teaching of that Church which has made Christian England what it is. In saying this, I say nothing against the Nonconformists, because they, too, have sprung from this old Church. The living Church must have an invisible Head to send down at

* For a development of this see Sermon XXVII., on "The Church of England a Goodly Heritage."

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every moment grace and righteousness into it. My belief in the Church is not something different from my belief in CHRIST ; it binds me to CHRIST, as the rope on the glacier binds me to my guide.

I leave you men of Cambridge, then, with this appeal. "There is a battle to fight," as Browning says, "ere the guerdon be gained." I summon you to take your part in the battle, and may Cambridge so throw itself with all its strength into the fight as not to leave the issue for a moment doubtful.

XIV

PERSONAL RELIGION*

MY subject is personal religion. I want you to forget about me, and simply fix your mind on GOD, as if there were only you and GOD in the whole world. Some day that will be all that matters. When, at the end of this swiftly-passing life on earth, you stand, as the Bible warns you you will stand, before GOD to give an account of yourself, there is nothing in the world that will matter but this: What does GOD think of me? That is the only thing which matters—not whether I have been popular on earth, not whether I have been rich, but what GOD thinks of me. I want you to isolate yourself, as I want to isolate myself, and speak as if I were here alone looking up into the face of GOD. I want you to follow me in your hearts, and remember that in all I say I am merely speaking as a brother man to my brother men, on exactly the same footing as themselves. .

* Spoken in substance at Oxford and Cambridge, and in this form to 800 men of the Prudential Assurance Company, December, 1905.

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Now, when I speak of personal religion, I mean that I am a person, that I am a personal spirit, as GOD is a personal Spirit ; that GOD made me in His image, which means that He made me a personal spirit, with a will and other things, of which I shall speak presently ; and that there is no one who has ever lived, or ever will live, in the whole world who is exactly the same as I am, or exactly the same as you are. Surely that is a wonderful thought—that there are three and three-quarter millions of people in this diocese alone, and every one absolutely different from the other.

Then, the second thing I know about myself is that I am a complex person. I am a person distinct from everyone else in the whole universe, but I am made up of different parts. I have a body (we will speak about that presently), but I am not my body. My body has changed every seven years, but I am the same. I am the same as the little boy who used (and it is what gives the subject a peculiar solemnity to me) to take down the one religious book of which I can remember the name in my mother's room at home, Goulburn's "Thoughts on Personal Religion." I know that I am that boy, but my body has changed over and over again. And when shallow speakers try to persuade you—as they used to try and persuade us in Victoria Park and the halls of East London—that your body is yourself, ask them how it is that, while you know you are the

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little boy that went to school, the body has changed over and over again. I am not my body then ; I have got something beside that. I have got a mind—a mind that can look behind and before. I am a thinking person. More than that, I have got something which tells me the difference between right and wrong. I may try and deceive it, I may try and stifle it—there may be some of my brother men here who are trying to do that even now—but I have a conscience, a thing which tells me the difference between right and wrong. It is not easily quieted. You can drug it ; you can try and persuade yourself that, because So-and-so does a thing, it is not wrong ; but this thing, which is like some voice within me, says it is wrong, and I cannot deny that I know the difference between right and wrong. Therefore I have not only a body and a mind, but a conscience. Again, I have got a will. I can or I cannot lift this watch from the table or leave it there. When people try and persuade me, as they often do, that I am driven by necessity to do this or that, or that I am bound to do it because of some necessary law, I tell them that I have often asked a thousand working men how long they would consider it an argument if, for the third time during the dinner-hour, one of their men took his mate's dinner because he was bound to take it. I am afraid he would have a pretty rough time of it the third time. Therefore I know and you know—common-

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sense tells us—that we have a free will, that we can or cannot do things ; and that, therefore, it is quite right that we should be judged as to whether we do things or do not do them, because not only have we body, mind, and conscience, but we have a free will, and it is this especially which makes us like God, because God is a free, personal Spirit.

But, further, not only am I a person, and a complex person, but I am born for a society. I cannot be at my best by myself. The man who says he can read his Bible at home and say his prayers at home does not grow to his best ; the man who lives to himself, and does not join with his fellows in any sort of amusement, does not grow to his best ; he becomes a self-centred person. I am a social person. Man is, as a philosopher long ago said, a social animal—that is to say, I have got relations with other people which must be expanded. I must not live a selfish life, because I am born for a society ; I am born for a Church.

Again, I cannot die. This is the awful responsibility of speaking to you men as I am doing now. I am speaking to men who cannot die if they want to die. Five minutes after death, as far as we understand the Bible, you will be the same as you were five minutes before. People say that when you die you go out like a candle. That is exactly what a candle does not do ; a candle does not go out. The force of the candle, the scientists tell us, passes into another force ; it does not go out

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at all. Force persists ; and therefore I have the awful responsibility, as far as we know, of speaking to people who will be alive somewhere this day one million years hence.

Having seen what personal religion means from the side of the person, we come next to ask, What is religion? Is there any band or bond which guides and governs this person in the realm of this universe in which he finds himself? It is a nightmare which sometimes oppresses us in days of doubt to imagine that we are on a planet which is travelling nineteen miles a second through space, with the whole system rushing on, and that we are in the middle of that system describing a kind of devil's dance through space, with no God, no ruler, no hand holding us. If this were so, we are, as St. Paul says, "of all men most miserable." But the question is, What is the band or the bond which binds us? That is, what is religion? Religion means a band, a bond, a tie—something which ties us, something which holds a person to something or someone. I think it was Professor Huxley who said that life was playing chess with an invisible opponent, who never passed over a mistake. What an awful picture of life! But is there a band, a bond, or tie? That is the next question I have to ask you. And again I answer in the affirmative. What is it that holds me as a living person?

1. A belief that God exists. God must exist if

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you come to think of it. A box of letters cannot throw themselves into a play of Shakespeare's, because there is a mark of mind in the play. So when you try and persuade me that the atoms of the universe threw themselves into the universe, as we see it, for instance, on a starry night, when we look up at the heavens and see a marvellous pageant, I say that it is just as absurd to say that the atoms threw themselves into that marvellous play, for there is a mark of mind in it also. Therefore God exists. Do I know more about Him? Yes. This conscience of mine tells me something more. Why should God be a "reclaiming witness against Himself," as Dr. Chalmers used to say, within the breast of everyone, if He were not righteous? It is clear that the God who made me put a conscience within me. He must have been a righteous God to have dared to do so, otherwise He has put a power in the heart of every child of His that tells us whether He is right or wrong—"a reclaiming witness against Himself," to use Dr. Chalmers' phrase. Therefore I am certain that He is righteous; and God help me if I go on sinning against that conscience, because when I do appear before God, He will know that I knew the difference between right and wrong. Imagine for a moment that some older man is misleading some younger one. God help him when he appears before God, for it would be better if a millstone were hung about his neck, and that he were

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drowned in the depths of the sea, than that he should mislead one of those little ones that trust in GOD. Conscience, then, tells me that GOD is a righteous GOD, and will judge the world righteously. I know about Him, and He also knows about me, and reads me through and through. Is not there something within every one of us telling us, when we are honest with ourselves, that there is Someone who reads us, who knows our thoughts, and with whom we have to do every day? I venture to say that every man's conscience tells him this if the voice of that conscience has not been dulled. But, thank GOD, not only does He know us, but He loves us better than He knows. Therefore the first bond which holds me is this: a belief in this loving, righteous, all-knowing, and yet patiently loving GOD—patiently loving, not striking the man, not striking the sinner, because "He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." That is the first bond of my personal religion.

But, you say, what about JESUS CHRIST in personal religion? You have said nothing about Him as yet. JESUS CHRIST reveals GOD. I do not believe in JESUS CHRIST as Someone different from GOD. The most comforting phrase in Holy Scripture, to my mind, is: "He that hath seen Me hath seen the FATHER." It is because I believe in the death of JESUS CHRIST upur the Cross that I can believe in the love of

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GOD at all. As Dr. Liddon used to say, "My Christianity safeguards my Theism." There is so much suffering in Nature, there is so much suffering in the animal creation, there is so much suffering in East London, there is so much injustice in the world, that I want something to cling to which will convince me every day that GOD is love, and I find that in the Cross of JESUS CHRIST. As Browning so beautifully puts it :

" . . . O heart I made, a heart beats here !
Face, my hands fashioned, see it in myself !
Thou hast no power nor mayst conceive of mine,
But love I gave thee, with myself to love,
And thou must love me who have died for thee !"*

But, you say, what about the HOLY SPIRIT ? The HOLY SPIRIT takes of JESUS CHRIST and shows Him to us ; He cries, Abba, Father, in our hearts. The HOLY SPIRIT comes to carry on, to bring home to us, the work of GOD the FATHER and GOD the SON. When a sermon impresses me, it is the HOLY SPIRIT who really speaks to me. When I go to church, or whatever means of grace I use (I have no doubt I am speaking both to people who are Churchmen and to some who would not call themselves Churchmen), it is the HOLY SPIRIT that makes them of any use at all. It is the HOLY SPIRIT that takes of JESUS CHRIST and shows Him to us. Therefore my personal religion theoretically is summed up in these words :

* Browning, " Epistle of Karshish."

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“through Him we have access by one SPIRIT unto the FATHER.”

But, of course, a mere lip belief in religion is nothing. There are some beings who believe everything I have said, and yet have no personal religion. The devils also believe, we are told, and tremble; and all I have said to you, so far, about the existence of God they know only too well.

2. Now comes the second part of personal religion: What is it to issue in? Supposing, my brothers, you have followed me so far, what has to be the natural consequence if it is to be of any avail? It must issue in four things. First of all, in regular prayer. I will tell you what I picture during my morning prayers. I will tell you very simply, just passing on to you the belief of my life. In my morning prayers I look up, and I picture God the FATHER with His hands full of blessings—wisdom, power, strength, and love—all the things that I want for my day's work as Bishop of a great diocese. I know I must work for them, I know I must ask for them. I must have them fresh every day, because the manna only lasted for the day. You cannot do to-day's work on yesterday's manna, or to-morrow's; it must be received day by day. Therefore I must pray every day, because the gifts for the day are given each day, or not at all. So it is in nature. The gold is God's gift, the coal is God's

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gift, the bread is GOD's gift. I have to mine for the gold, I have to dig for the coal, and I have to sow and reap for the bread. It is the same in the spiritual world. The gifts are the gifts of GOD, but I have to work for them by earnest prayer. I picture GOD the FATHER with the gifts in His hands, and JESUS CHRIST kneeling by my side, saying, "Simon, Simon, Satan is desiring to have you, that he may sift you as wheat, but I am praying for thee that thy faith fail not." And then I pray to the HOLY SPIRIT—I invoke the HOLY SPIRIT. It is promised that the HOLY SPIRIT will pray in me "with groanings that cannot be uttered." I dare say some of you find, as we all find, prayer a difficult thing; but you will find it the greatest help in the world, when you are kneeling cold and dead of a morning, or in the evening, tired, perhaps, by the day's work, to say :

"Come, HOLY GHOST, my soul inspire";

come and pray in me; come and enable me to pray according to the will of GOD." That is what the HOLY SPIRIT's great and happy function is; and then you will pray in the spirit. Religion must issue in regular prayer.

Then, it must issue next in intercession. Nothing in the world is more a matter of faith than intercession. When you look into nature you will find the struggle for the life of others goes on side by side with the struggle for life in itself. Read

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Drummond's "Ascent of Man." Take the Old Testament. In response to Abraham's intercession, God says: "I will not destroy the city for fifty, forty, thirty, twenty, ten's sake." Moses holds up his hands above the battle, and when he holds up his hands Israel prevails; when he puts down his hands Amalek prevails. Aaron runs in between, intercedes—the exact words—between the living and the dead. And when we come to the New Testament we are said to be kings and priests together—a kingdom of priests. We must carry on this work of intercession. Therefore, if you believe these things, the second result is you will pray for wife and children, for those in the office who work alongside of you, for the boys who may be watching you and be under your care. You will be praying and interceding, not only for yourself, but also for those you come across in life. You will be bound to do it if you practise personal religion.

Thirdly, Religion will issue in praise. There is not half enough praise in our religion to-day. The psalms are full of praise. Old devotional writers, like Bishop Andrewes, are full of praise. We have to forget ourselves and simply think of God. As God listens down from Heaven and does not hear praise from anyone, He says, as He said of the little cobbler lad who had been spirited away, "I miss My little human praise."* There must

* Browning, "The Boy and the Angel."

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be issuing forth from our hearts hymns of praise if our personal religion is of real effect.

And then Religion issues—to those, at any rate, who have gone into the history of Christian institutions—in the Holy Communion. I do not myself at all dogmatise about the Holy Communion. I do not know anything more about it than you do. I simply take what CHRIST says. I ask you to read over again the New Testament, however you have been brought up. “The Church to teach and the Bible to prove” is the motto of the Church of England ; and when JESUS CHRIST said, “Take, eat, this is My body broken for you ; this is My blood,” He must have meant that He was instituting some special means of grace in the Holy Communion, otherwise the awful words have no meaning at all.

3. Then I pass to the third part of personal religion. We know the hypocrite who prays and talks about his prayers, who goes to church or chapel, but you see no result of it in his life. Now, the third part of personal religion is this : If religion is a true bond it has to bind those four parts of my person and your person of which I spoke at the commencement—it has to bind the body, the mind, the conscience, and the will. It has to govern the body. It was Plato, I think, who said that man was made up of a god, a lion, and a beast, and that the whole future of the man depended upon whether the lion made an

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alliance with the god or with the beast. It is possible for a man to-day to sink to the level of a beast. When a man has a horse, and keeps the reins in his hands and the bit in the horse's mouth, the horse is a splendid servant; but let the reins be round his feet and the horse at full gallop, and the horse is a terrible master. Now, we have to choose between the two. Either that body can be a most awful tyrant, a most terrible master, or it can be the obedient and useful servant of the spirit. In the one case the man sinks down into a beast, in the other he rises up towards a god. I do not know at the present moment of any more awful question for London than this—as to whether the men of London are going to degenerate into beasts, or rise up to be gods. If I am to hold down the instincts and passions of the body I must have religion; I must have the power of God to purify my thoughts, to give me self-control, and then in the power of God the body is a splendid servant. There is nothing wrong with the body in itself. JESUS CHRIST wore a human body entirely without sin. There is nothing wicked but a wicked will, and God knows that. The man who may be persuading himself that he cannot help doing this or that must remember that God knows whether that is true or not.

Religion, then, has to bind the body. Secondly, it has got to bind the mind. I dare say many of you have your doubts and difficulties to-day, as

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many of us have had in days gone by, but the secret of success is to look for light honestly. There is a great promise—and I say this to cheer any of you who are in doubt and difficulty—which runs : “He that wills to do the will of GOD shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of GOD.” It is the man who does not want to know who never finds the truth. The sham doubter, the shallow doubter, never finds the light, and does not deserve to do so ; but the honest doubter who is looking up to the light and is praying for the light, and is not content with taking some hasty statement out of a magazine, but goes into the matter thoroughly—he finds the light. “He that wills to do the will of GOD shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of GOD.”

Religion, then, governs the mind. It also satisfies the conscience. Archbishop Temple, when he was speaking to a thousand men at Bethnal Green, on Conscience and the Bible, for an hour one afternoon, said : “JESUS CHRIST not only satisfies the conscience, but He educates it while He satisfies it.” It is a noble saying. What it means is this: that if we sit down to think of some perfect character, we could not think of anything so perfect as the character of JESUS CHRIST. Therefore He educates the conscience while He satisfies it. There can be only one test for those who have real personal religion, and that is, What would JESUS do? That is the reason that

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the book called "What would JESUS do?" reached a sale of two million copies, because it hit a real need in human nature. What would JESUS do? That is the only question any Christian of any denomination has a right to ask every day? Would He be brave and bear witness? Would He see this person or that wronged? Would He see that lad misled? He would not—no, He would die rather. What sort of life ought I to live? What sort of life did He live? That is the sole question we shall ask ourselves when religion binds the conscience.

So, again, it binds the will. Religion is not a matter of feeling. I found during our West End Mission that many people were exercised about their feelings. There may be some of you who have been Christians for a long time, who had very warm feelings when they began. We have to go on often without warm feelings by the power of the will. "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." Do not be discouraged; it is a matter of will. I *will* conquer that fault; I *will* get up in the morning to say my prayers before going to the City; I *will* go to church or chapel every Sunday; I *will* do it. It means an effort and determination of the will. Religion, therefore, inspires the will.

And then, lastly, I only find myself if I lose myself. What I want to see in a great body of Christian men is more unselfishness; I want to

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see a greater interest in the work of the spread of the Gospel. When missionaries take their lives into their hands and go to China it is something which inspires the whole Church—they lose themselves to find themselves. We are so selfish in our religion—even religious people. Therefore, to really find personal religion in our personal lives we must all lose ourselves in some great cause, and the more we lose ourselves, the more we shall find ourselves.

I ask you all, then, dear brothers, to sum up your resolutions about personal religion in the striking words of the poet—"whatever others may do, whether I am backed up by public opinion or not, I will stand firm myself":

"For I intend to get to God,
For 'tis to God I speed so fast,
For on God's breast, my own abode,
Those shoals of dazzling glory passed,
I lay my spirit down at last."*

* Browning, "Johannes Agricola."

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XV

RELIGION IN RELATION TO SOCIAL DUTIES AND PLEASURES*

WHAT are the laws of the kingdom of God with regard to social duties and pleasures? I want you to notice at once two things about this title. First of all we recognise—I heartily recognise—that there are duties and reasonable pleasures in the West End of London.

Take, first of all, the duties. I remember speaking to a young wife about the tyranny of the card-case (and I must tell you that when I invite people to come to live in East London the chief attraction which I put before their eyes is that they escape the tyranny of the card-case). She said—and I felt that it was perfectly true—“Well, Bishop, I feel this: my husband goes down to the City every day, and I think it part of my positive duty that I should keep up his acquaintances and friendships for him. He is hard at work in the City, and I owe this duty

* Address given in Bridgewater House to the girls of West London, Lent, 1905.

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to him." It does seem to me, I confess, a very toilsome business, that card-case — going round day after day, as so many have to do, especially, perhaps, young married women. It must often be a real toil, and yet I have felt that it is a social duty which many have to discharge. Or, again, when some girl, who has, perhaps, "just come out," finds that her mother has arranged certain things for her in society, I should say that it is positively wrong for her to derange all her mother's plans for her because she wants to spend four or five evenings, we will say, in the East End. That there are social duties in the West End of London I want to acknowledge before I go any further.

I say, also, that there are social pleasures. Why should not the rich meet together at certain times in the year in London and enjoy themselves? We have plenty of social gatherings at Bethnal Green and the East of London, and why should not the rich enjoy themselves in their own way at their end of London?

And here I had better at once, perhaps, correct a mistake that has arisen about something I once said about bridge-playing. Let me say at once that I never told you that you were to play for penny points at bridge. What I said was that there was an old gentleman of my acquaintance who, in a large drawing-room in the evening, when bridge was introduced, always said in a loud

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voice, "I never play except for penny points." I did not say that he was right. I did not say that you were to do that at all. I merely quoted that incident of that old gentleman who tried to help on the younger members of society by saying that, at any rate, he did not play for more than one penny a point.

I am not going to talk much about it. But my firm belief is that it is far better for girls and young married women not to play for money. I have known of a number of girls in country houses and in society who have been put in most uncomfortable positions by losing money over bridge. Therefore I am quite clear that from every point of view it is best not to play for money. I have spoken about the subject to some of the best-known hostesses in London, and I find that the best of them who have consideration for the younger people always arrange at their various parties to have two or three tables at which the play is not for money, and I am perfectly certain that many young men who would be far too shy to claim it for themselves would be only too thankful if they themselves could be saved from losing the money which they can ill afford. Therefore, while we are on this subject of social pleasures, let me be clear on that point. I put it to you that the really wise girl in London society to-day makes it a rule that she will not play for money, and I believe that in doing so she does

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something which will not only help herself, but will, perhaps, help many others who are younger than herself, or perhaps weaker in character than herself, to hold firm.

Now, having cleared the ground, I come to the laws of the kingdom as they rule people in relation to the social pleasures and social amusements.

1. And the first thing is the law of loyalty. I have not any doubt that I am speaking to girls and women who have nearly all been confirmed, and I want them to throw back their minds for the moment to what, I hope, was the happy day of their Confirmation. I expect that nearly every one of you sang on that day, "O JESUS, I have promised to serve Thee to the end," and, unless I am very much mistaken, you certainly meant it then. I want you now to ask yourselves quietly whether you have kept that promise—whether you are obeying the law of loyalty to the King of the kingdom of GOD. Of course, I need not tell you that we live in that kingdom. When we say "Our citizenship is in heaven"—which is the real translation of "Our conversation is in heaven"—we mean that we owe fealty and loyalty to an unseen King, "whom, having not seen, we love"; and, whatever we are doing here in society on earth, and however reasonable and right it is to join in it, we are bound at every step by invisible bonds which connect us with our unseen King and the person of the LORD of Glory.

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I should like to put this first, because I am certain that if any class in the world knows what loyalty is, it is you—loyalty to your parents, loyalty to your friends, loyalty to your lovers. Are you at this moment, and have you been for the last few years, loyal to JESUS CHRIST? That is a question that I want to ask you. Everything comes round to this: "Am I loyal to JESUS CHRIST at every moment of the day? Am I loyal to my unseen King?"

Do you say, "Well, Bishop, I used to feel like that, but my faith has grown very weak lately, and all kinds of doubts have been put into my head, and I do not feel so clear about the faith of JESUS CHRIST as I did on that Confirmation day?" Well, then, I say, face those doubts. There are plenty of people who will help you about them. There is many a man who has been through much doubt in the past, when his boyish faith was passing into his man's faith; and I dare say it is so as your girl's faith passes into your woman's faith. But do not let that time of trial and time of pain, as it very often is, rob you of your faith in God. Your faith will be all the stronger if you face the doubt and difficulty properly. Therefore, by far the best thing is to ask someone whom you can trust to help you through this time of difficulty and doubt. I feel certain that my own faith is ten times as strong because I went through such a time and had to face my doubts, and every single

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year since that time has made it stronger. Do not be then content with a vague sort of view about JESUS CHRIST. He is the one reality of the world, and do not therefore be content until you get back to the faith in JESUS CHRIST which you once had.

Or perhaps it is not so much any real doubt as something which is weighing on your conscience. Of course, I hear, and in my position I must hear, the secrets of many souls—more in the case of men and boys than of women and girls, but still I hear of all kinds—and I have found over and over again that the real secret of doubt or of drifting away is some one thing that is lying on the conscience, and until that one thing is removed there is no peace, no happiness in life, no service and no fighting for JESUS CHRIST. Therefore, for God's sake get that thing off your conscience. Or perhaps, far more than any definite state of doubt, there is a kind of general slackness of spiritual life altogether. You get up tired in the morning. You forget to say your prayers, and as to Bible-reading, why, you hardly open the Bible now, or you do so just as a matter of form, perhaps when you are very tired at night, and you hardly take in what you read. And you have really got slack about going to church. You almost tremble to think how long it is since you went to the Holy Communion. I do not know, and I am not saying that it is so, but I make the

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suggestion that there may be a general slackness in the whole of your spiritual life ; and it is no good to give rules about this or that detail in society life. What you want is to come back to your centre. You must come back to your loyalty to JESUS CHRIST. Do not forget that He has never ceased to be loyal to you. Remember that saying in Browning, when the little cobbler lad ceased his prayers because he was transported away to Rome, and GOD said the next morning :

“I miss my little human praise.”

I think that that is a delightful idea, and the LORD who confirmed you on that happy Confirmation day has not forgotten you ; and if you have fallen away from Him, and given up speaking to Him, think of Him saying of you, “I miss my little human praise.”

And, therefore, loyalty is the first law that I ask you to obey again if you have broken it. “He that loveth hath fulfilled the law,” which means that he or she that is loyal can go into any society, because the law of loyalty holds them true.

2. Then, secondly, comes the law of proportion. It is not that a game of cards for the love of the thing is wrong. It is not that going to the theatre is wrong in itself if the play is a good one. It is not that any amusement in itself is wrong as a recreation, but it is that over and over again, hour after hour, absorbing all the energies, recreations take

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the place of real work, and time that was meant for educating the mind and spirit has gone in some mere amusement. That is really where the fault lies, and the whole thing is producing a kind of restlessness. That is what I find is the mischief often more than any one definite sin. There is a kind of restlessness over all society at the West End of London.

Now, the law of proportion is a beautiful law of GOD. All GOD's works are so beautifully ordered because the law of proportion governs them all; and therefore I want you to look over your lives and see whether they have the law of proportion in them. I will not mention any special amusement again; but how much time is spent over this or that to which you are devoting, and have devoted in the past, several hours a day! How much time and thought is spent over dress! I am one of those who believe that it is absolutely wrong to imagine that there is any virtue in being dowdy, and I would go so far as to say that it is a duty for every woman in every rank of life to try to make the best of her dress with her means. But, still, I ask you—and I am not speaking without a certain amount of evidence, although you know far better than I do about such things—whether the amount of time and thought that is spent over dress in the West End of London is not out of all proportion to the importance of the matter. And then pass from

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that and come to the question of how you have gone on with your education, which began, perhaps, at some good school, and think how much will depend in the future on your value and interest to the companion of your life. Perhaps you may marry, and find that all your intellectual life has been running to seed, and all the powers that you might have developed have come to nothing. Surely it is time to look at the proportion of things. I was speaking once to someone who told me that, after her marriage, her husband, who was interested in all kinds of affairs that went on in the world, was astonished to find that she had not read about this or that which he might have naturally expected any person with any mind or intellect would have read, and she was unable to share his interest in it and compare notes with him and give him advice with regard to this or that thing. I want you to think over your life, and to remember that it is of priceless value, and try to plan it out in such a way that the unseen Master who watches you sees the law of proportion carried out. Have amusements, I say, by all means. At your age, of course, you must have amusement and recreation in your life, but do have your life laid out with prayer to start with, and with some reading in the morning, some bit of time laid aside to visit anyone of your acquaintance who is sick or ill, or someone who may be a little dull. Have all that laid out in the 'day, so that at

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the end of the day, at your evening prayers, you may look back and see that some kind of proportion has governed the day which God has given you.

3. Then, my third law is the law of charity. I have been rather surprised at your almost unanimous feeling that the competition among girls and the hurry and push of society life are some of the worst features about it, and that constantly even good girls become spiteful and uncharitable, and break one of the most elementary laws of the Christian kingdom, which is the law of charity. The beautiful law of charity must bind the Christian who wants to serve CHRIST. Dr. Mozley has a wonderful sermon among his University sermons, called "Our Duty towards our Equals." I think that he is perfectly right when he says that it is our duty towards our equals that is the real difficulty. It is so easy to be kind to the poor ; it is so easy to go and half patronise someone who is younger than ourselves or in a different position from our own, but our duty towards our equals—those who may be even our rivals in something—that is what tests Christian charity. Therefore, I feel perfectly certain that one of the laws of the kingdom which must bind every young Christian soul is the law of charity—never saying a thing behind the back of anyone which is not really kind and true, and in the press and competition and rush of life never forgetting that the Christian law is the law of charity.

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4. And then, fourthly, the law of witness. I want to remind you of the enormous influence which you have over boys and young men. I do not think that it is possible to imagine what would happen to the young man who comes from Oxford or Cambridge and then goes into London society if once his ideal were lowered of what a good girl or a good woman ought to be. I find over and over again that men are very often led to cling to religion through some good woman whom they know. What keeps them straight, pure, and true is some one of you whom they know as a sister or a friend, or someone who is to them a beautiful ideal. Now, I say that if you are to keep up that you must obey the law of witness. The stars bear witness of the sun; they shine to tell the world that when the night is over the world will see the sun again. Realise that you have this priceless influence. I believe that it is not realised by you; but you do possess it, and you must answer to CHRIST as to how you use it. You can ruin a life quite easily, or you can uplift a character in a way that no angel can, because of your influence at a certain time of life over young men and boys. No other influence in the world is so strong, and therefore my fourth law is the law of witness.

And I should like you to ask yourselves, looking back, perhaps, over three or four years, "How have I used this influence? Is there anyone who is worse for my influence or for the things that I

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have said or the things that I have done?" Because, if so, these are sins to be confessed to God in the quiet time of Lent. Make a resolution to grasp again that influence which God has given you, and to use it as a thing of which you are a steward.

5. And this brings me to the law of worship. There is a quotation from "An Onlooker's Notebook" which is worth reading: "The observance of Sunday when I first knew society was, in greater or less degree, almost universal. Now it hardly exists." I think that this is an exaggeration; but, still, I want you to think over the week-ends which you spend, and think whether this description of them is true: "Smart people in London generally go away from Saturday till Monday, and in the country houses where they spend their 'week-ends' Sunday is completely secularised. The keener spirits play bridge in the afternoon, and in the evening billiards and cards have effectually displaced those ivory letters which were the extreme limit of the gaiety permitted by our fathers." That, of course, is meant as a sort of popular skit on the modern Sunday, but it illustrates and brings us face to face with the state of the case.

The question which I want you to ask yourselves when Sunday comes is, What is the price at which I put the worship that I am going to pay my risen LORD? That is the point, and it

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all comes round to that. Do not let us get confused by the question, Why is it wrong to do this or that on Sunday? Worship is going on everywhere in creation, and all inanimate things worship God. The sky and clouds all worship Him ; and the law of worship is the law of the kingdom. The woman of the Gospel brought the very costliest box of ointment, and because it was costly she broke it and poured it upon the head of her Saviour. When Sunday comes He wants to see how much you care about Him. I do not think that there is one of us who would deliberately say that we owe less to JESUS CHRIST than that woman did ; but what is the cost of the box of ointment that we are prepared to break and pour upon His head ? I hope that you will think over what I call the fifth law, the law of worship, and that you will see whether you cannot obey it more loyally and more readily than you have done in the past.

6. And then I come to the law of service. The reason why I am so keen about the law of service is that it is service for the Master that makes one realise what religion is. I do not remember myself realising at all what religion meant until I was in the midst of two thousand poor people in my first curacy. I found myself suddenly looked upon as a sort of earthly providence, and it was a surprise to me that they should look to me for sympathy and help. I was a comparatively young

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man, and it quite drew me out of myself and made me realise CHRIST's love in a way that nothing else could.

I pray for you that, in some way or other, you may have the extraordinary influence of service upon your characters. Do get out of saying perpetually, "I wonder what people think of me?" or, "How shall I enjoy myself?" It is then that you will begin to understand what life is. I think that it was Phillips Brooks who said: "It is not when a ship is fretting her side against the wharf that she knows her true life. It is when the rope is cut which binds her to the wharf, and she plunges across the sea with the wind over her and the water under her. Then it is that she knows her true life." And I am certain that it is not when we are fretting against the wharf of our miserable selves, and asking what people think about us and how we shall get on; but it is when we cut the rope which binds us to ourselves, and we go out into the ocean with the wind of the SPIRIT over us and the waters of humanity under us, that we know the true joy of man or woman, boy or girl. We do not get to know ourselves until we obey the law of service.

And here let me say that I do not imagine for a moment that young girls can go into the East End of London by themselves at night. Someone once said to me, "You do not mean to say that you think that my two young daughters can go and

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spend their time in Bethnal Green every night?" I said, "Certainly not; but is there no field of service within half a mile of this very place?" Who is to go and pay a visit to the Children's Hospital in Great Ormond Street except the girls of London and the women of London? Who is to go and serve in those countless poor parishes in West London at which no one seems to look? Who is to go except those who have leisure and happiness and everything given them here? When I ask myself why there are rich and why there are poor, there can be only one answer. It is not because God loves one and does not love the other. It is not because we people here are favourites with God. God Himself would cease to be God if that was true. The case is like that of two boys who are sent to school by the same father, and one has the journey-money and the supplies, and the father hardly thinks it necessary to tell him that, of course, he has to share them with his younger brother. We are not come into the world alone. You have the journey-money and the supplies, and there is within half a mile of you that poor girl in a lingering illness in some poor little garret in Soho or Marylebone. You may go and see her of an afternoon, and take some flowers with you, or some story-book to read. You can do many little kindly acts of service. I do not ask for impossibilities. I know several families who have gone from the West to live down in the

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East of London, but I am only asking you to obey the law of service as far as you can amongst the poor. It is the little things of life, the little acts of unnoticed service, that I ask you to perform in the service of GOD.

7. The next law is the law of day by day. I have not forgotten that some of you may have a very difficult life to live and very heavy burdens to bear. Out of the hundreds of letters which I receive from the West End, I have been astonished at the troubles and the sorrows that there are at this end of London, and it is quite possible that, as bravely as you can, some of you are facing a really terrible trouble at home or in your own lives. Will you take what I call the next law of the kingdom—the law of day by day? It is a marvellous one, and I believe that there are hundreds who could never bear their lives without it. It is only one day at a time that we have to bear anything and only one to work, and it is this which helps people to go on from day to day, whatever their burdens and sorrow and anxiety; if they take one at a time they can do and bear everything, and they can keep quiet and cheerful. And, therefore, take the law of day by day not only now, but for the future. “Give us day by day our daily bread.” “Take no thought for the morrow”—no anxious thought. Do not worry about the morrow. That is really the secret of doing heavy work and the secret of bearing heavy sorrow.

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8. Then the next law—the eighth—is the law of intercession. Have you read that interesting book of Drummond's, "The Ascent of Man"? He shows how at the very beginning of things in Nature the struggle for the life of others goes *pari passu* with the individual struggle for life. That is the little nucleus out of which the whole life of intercession grows. I believe that by having every morning, and, if possible, in the middle of the day, a few minutes of quiet interceding for others we can help them as we can in no other way. You cannot hate anyone for whom you pray. Remember that, and if you have a difficult case or difficult person to deal with, pray for that one besides praying for those you love. It is marvellous what it does, and CHRIST expects us to do it. "Pray ye, therefore, the LORD of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest." Pray for the diocese, pray for your friends, pray for your families, pray for the brothers who look to you so much and lean upon you. I do not think there is any happiness in life like the happiness which comes from regular intercession, and only the last day will reveal what the power of intercession is. Abraham, for instance, prayed, and fifty, or forty, or thirty, and at last ten, righteous would have saved the city in answer to his prayer. Moses held up his hand above the battle, and did in that way more than Joshua did when he was fighting down in the plain, and when his hands went down

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Amalek prevailed. Aaron interceded, and stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed ; and we are told that we are kings and priests to GOD.

9. And the last law is the law of Communion. If I had to sum up in one word what would keep the Christian girl strong and brave, and charitable and loving, and unselfish and pure-hearted, all through the difficulties of her life, I would say let her be a regular and devout communicant, because CHRIST pours into us in His own way His own character. We become partakers of the Divine nature. It is His own plan, His own special way, His own special service ; and therefore boy or girl, man or woman, is made like CHRIST by feeding upon CHRIST in living faith.

Will you take these words in the spirit in which I offer them? Will you take these nine laws of the kingdom? Just to remind you, I will give them to you again : loyalty, proportion, charity, witness, worship, service, day by day, intercession, and Communion ; and if you obey those beautiful laws which bind you to the beautiful world above, then you will have a Heaven upon earth. " Surely it is Heaven upon earth," says a great writer, " when a man's mind rests in Providence, moves in charity, and turns upon the poles of truth."

XVI

THE DUTY OF SERVICE*

IN coming to address the Lend-a-Hand Club, I feel that I am not speaking merely to strangers. Many of you I know personally, and those whom I do not know personally, I look upon as valued fellow-workers with me in one of the greatest of causes. Therefore there is at once between us, at least from my point of view, a bond of sympathy which makes it comparatively easy to speak to you. On the other hand, I never find these addresses easy, and I will tell you why. Perhaps it is that I see both sides too plainly, but certainly I do feel very strongly that enjoyment of life in itself is very natural to you at your age. I think that there are few verses in poetry which appeal to me more than that verse of Browning :

“How good is man’s life, the mere living! How fit to
employ
All the heart and the soul and the senses for ever in joy!”

* Address to West End girls, enrolled in a “Lend-a-Hand Club,” at Bridgewater House, June, 1905.

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The love of life is so natural and so right, and therefore I have great sympathy, I must say, with the girl, especially just when she has "come out," who feels that she has a certain amount of right thoroughly to enjoy life. I want to recognise that.

Then, again, I feel a great sympathy with the home people who say, "We have a right to expect our sisters and our daughters to be the brightness and the happiness of our home." I picked up one of your fathers—but not wild horses will make me say which father it was—and brought him as far as the door with me on my way here, and he gave me a most delightful account of the Lend-a-Hand Club as it appeared to him, and said how little it interfered with the brightness and the happiness of his home. His girls, according to his account, could not be nicer at home than they were. Now, that is what we want to have said in all the homes of the members of the Lend-a-Hand Club. We do not want the club to be looked upon as a nuisance. I remember so well staying at a house where there was a girl who was working down in Bethnal Green, and, somehow or other, the effect of her work upon her little sister at home was such that, when I said "Are you coming to Bethnal Green when you are old enough?" she answered "Certainly not," and her attitude towards Bethnal Green was so very hostile that I called her, during my visit, "the anti-Bethnal Greener." Well, of course, she was

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quite young, and only half in earnest in what she said ; but we manage badly when we make the home people bored with our work. I want to put in, then, a word of sympathy for the home people, and I find it difficult—in fact, impossible—to ignore that the home people have a right to expect you to be at your best at home, and not to have their family arrangements upset too often with the claims of East London or of any other place. Then, again—and, you see, I am giving the home people as much as I possibly can before I start on the other tack—I do quite sympathise with the mother who says to me, “You do not really think, Bishop, that it is right for my two daughters to go down in the middle of the night into Whitechapel or some place like that?” Not at all. I do not at all think that a young girl is in her right place or is doing right when she insists upon going down into some rather questionable quarter by herself in the late hours of the evening.

Now, having said that, let me turn to the other side, and say why it is that it is impossible to let that view, which is so widely accepted by those who do not belong to the Lend-a-Hand Club, govern the whole situation.

The first reason is because of the subtle selfishness which creeps over all of us ; this is equally true whether we are Bishops, or other men or women, or boys or girls. A subtle selfishness creeps over

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all of us if we are not careful in our lives. Will you turn to that most searching parable of Dives and Lazarus? Was Dives a bad man? I see no reason in the world to suppose that he was a bad man. He was merely a man who would have enjoyed what answered in the ancient days to his Ranelagh, and his Ascot, and his little private dinners to his friends, and simply ignored the poor man who lay at his gate. That was all he did. We have not a word of Scripture to tell us that he ill-treated Lazarus, or that he was morally vicious in any way. He simply went on with the life that came to him naturally, without thinking of anything else; and a subtle selfishness crept over his nature, until the awful result was that there was a great gulf fixed, not only between him and Lazarus, but between him and God. There was a great gulf fixed between him and all the joy and innocence and unselfishness of the other world. He could not go there, for he was not fit for it. Judas went to his own place—the place that he had prepared for himself by his life. And Dives went to his own place. And, therefore, the first reason why it is impossible to let the considerations we mentioned first govern the whole life is that a subtle selfishness is certain to creep over us, and finally part us from God.

Then, again, in the second place, we have no earthly grounds for imagining that we are here in these comfortable quarters in London and in our

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comfortable homes by any right at all. We all know the story of the old saint who, whenever he saw a criminal taken to execution, used to say, "There, but for the grace of God, goes John Bradford." He was stating one of the simplest and most elementary truths in life. We have no earthly right to take it for granted that we are here on account of any merit of our own at all. When I look back over my own boyhood, and remember the beautiful country valley where I went fishing and shooting in my holidays, I have to remember that, as far as any credit to myself goes, I might have been a grubby little boy in Whitechapel, and that it was from no credit of my own at all that I was sent to a public school and to the University. I am merely stating facts, and you must not mind if I speak very plainly. I want to lead you to the idea that it is no credit to you at all that you are in the West End of London, living in your lovely homes, and were brought here in all those motors which I passed as I came in. As far as regards any credit of your own, you might have been born one of a family of ten in the home of a drunkard in a slum. When you face that, you realise that there is some claim on the part of the world, and some claim on the part of God, that you should do something in return for the happy place in which He has put you in the world. I very much want you to remember that. I remind myself of it as much as

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I can, and I want to remind you of it also, lest you should slip into the idea that it is due to your own credit that you are here, and that you are not one of fifty factory girls in some great factory. If you do, you will ignore one of the elementary facts of life.

Then, in the third place, *laissez faire*, which, of course, is a great temptation in West London, would leave us, it is true, where we are, but it would leave forty-nine other people with an equal claim with us upon God to be where they are. And, therefore, I would like to repeat what I have said in this very room in Lent.* The situation is just like the case of two boys who are sent to school by their parents; to one is given the journey-money and the supplies, but the father hardly thinks that it is necessary to tell him that he has to share it with the other boy, and would be horrified if the other boy was to be left by himself on the platform at Willesden without any money and without any food. If he was, in all probability the elder boy would have been severely punished the next time he went home to his parents. At any rate, he ought to have taken it for granted that he was to share the money and the food, even if little had been said by the parent about it. The analogy holds good in life. I am sent with other lives linked with mine, and I am the elder brother, and I have the journey-money and the supplies given

* See previous address, p. 171.

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to me by the Heavenly FATHER. You, in a similar way, as an elder sister, have the lives of some younger sisters linked with yours, and when we stand before the FATHER in the eternal home, the first question that will be asked of us is what we did with the leisure, and the money, and the religious education, and the riches that we had. That is the point. God thunders in His Word over and over again that we are to share it with the sister or the brother whose life is linked with ours, but over and over again I find this fact ignored. I have put it before half the public schools in England, and the boys see it in a moment. If we acknowledge it, then there must be some way, there must be some club, there must be some means, by which we can find the young sister or the young brother whose life is linked with ours, to whom we have to pass on what we hold in trust for both.

And then, fourthly, we come to something which it is easier for me to say than for you; and that is that you have in trust something which no one in the world could give except you. I mean that I think it very hard for anybody—boy or girl, or man or woman—really to think that they have anything to give the world. I am sure that this prevents many of our most modest boys and young men from being ordained. They cannot believe that they have anything to pass on to a parish, and I am quite ready to believe

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that some of you who have just lately joined our Club can hardly believe that you have anything to pass on which is worth the world having. Believe me when I say this—that not all the bench of Bishops, nor all the two thousand clergy that are working in London, could pass on certain things that you could pass on. We might work our hardest, but there would always be a gift waiting for the world, but unspent upon the world unless you give it. I have seen myself, time after time, a girl like one of you doing work in a poor street, or in a children's ward in a hospital, or with a class of rough boys, which, I am perfectly certain, no clergyman in the world could have done in the same way. You must have found out yourselves the really touching way in which some of the poor women will come to you. They call you "my dear," I have no doubt, and seem half to patronise you; but they really look forward to your visit as the brightest spot in a very dull and very monotonous week. And, therefore, my fourth question is, What right have you, trusted with a gift which no one could pass on, in the middle of a thirsty world, to keep it to yourselves? I cannot conceive that you have any right to do so. I cannot conceive that, if you look at it from that point of view, you will keep back your gift. You are much too generous to do that if you thought you had it, but you do not believe that you have got it. I tell you that you have got

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a gift of sympathy and tact which no one else in the world possesses.

And, then, in passing it on there is a joy which you find in nothing else in the world. I was lately reading a book by Mrs. Humphry Ward, "The Marriage of William Ashe," and I was struck, among other things in it, by a true touch of human nature. A very disagreeable man, more than three-fourths a blackguard, is changed to a certain extent by fighting for the Bosnian insurgents, and exchanging his fashionable life for a life of hardship and danger, fighting often desperate battles, and carrying women and children out of danger. In the midst of the stern realities of life, his conceit and shallowness disappear, and he says: "I do not think that I ever was so happy as during that year of hardship." And Lord Kitchener meant very much the same when he said at the end of the South African War: "You have tasted the salt of life, and you will not soon lose the taste of it." My fifth point is, then, that there is a joy in service. In using your particular gifts for the good of others there is a joy which you cannot have, and never will have, in any other way. And the peculiar thing is that the joy increases as you go on in life. Of course, there is a great difference between twenty, forty, and sixty; but I am certain that the joy of service keeps a person perpetually young in spirit. It is the real elixir of life for which the old chemists

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were vainly looking in the Middle Ages. They tried to find, if you remember, the elixir of life which would give whoever drank it perpetual youth. Of course, they never found it. But this joy, surely, must be what JESUS CHRIST promised when He said, "The water which I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up to everlasting life." And, therefore, my fifth reason for saying that you must in some way find means for using your gifts in the service of others is that without doing so you lose the chief joy of life. I have seen it over and over again in the case of young men at the Oxford House. They have come often from some of the most beautiful homes in England; they have been very popular in the University; they have known, perhaps, the joy of making a "century" for their school and for their University. They have known all the ordinary joys of life. But such a one has told me, over and over again, that he has had a happiness in spending three months of a hot summer in sending children into the country from East London such as he had never known in his whole life before. Do not lose, therefore, the chief joy of life.

Two more considerations, and then I will try to say a word as to the Lend-a-Hand Club, and the spirit in which it should be worked. The sixth point is the shortness of life. I remember when I was little more than a boy being very much impressed

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by a story which I read then, and the story stayed by me so long that I really think that it did make an impression on me for life. It was the story of a tradesman who was dying, and when his friends gathered round him, and thought that he was quite unconscious, they said : "What a pity that a young man like this should die in the prime of life ! Why, he might have made a fortune if he had lived !" The man was really conscious, and he raised himself on his elbow and looked up into their faces, and said : "I have heard what you said, but if you were to lie as I lie now, and know that all the gold in the world could not buy you back five minutes of life, all thoughts like those would be swallowed up in the one awful thought, 'In five minutes I shall have to meet my God, and I shall have to meet Him empty-handed.' " Now, it is just that thought of the shortness of life, and meeting God empty-handed, that I want you to think of for a moment as a motive for being good members of the Lend-a-Hand Club. Think of being empty-handed, and having nothing whatever to bring God as the result of life ; think of life where the enjoyment of amusement becomes every year less keen, and nothing whatever at the end to show for the life which was given us in trust.

And then, lastly, what are we told of the life of Heaven ? Of course, we know little about its details, but this we do know—that it is a life of

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praise and service. In Heaven they praise and they serve, and their service is an element in their praise. I have known so many instances lately of young people—young women and young girls—killed in a moment. And, of course, their relations come to me—I am very glad that they should—for a little comfort. It seems an utter break in their lives. I remember one poor woman who came only a few days ago. Her only sister and her cousin had been killed in a moment, in a carriage accident. Now, the only possible way to face such things, which may happen in a moment, is to have a sense of the continuity of life. When a young surgeon in the hospital died not very long ago trying to suck the poison from the throat of a child that was dying, and the child died too, the world thought it was a terrible waste of life, but the *Spectator* of that week hit the true point when it said that what the angels saw was “a young man enter perfect life and in his arms a little living child.” I am certain of this—the way to stop the shock of sudden death is to feel the continuity between our life here and the life there. Sudden death or the sudden snapping of life ought not to be the shock which it is at present to nearly all of us. Here is my point. Unless there is service here there can be no real praise, and unless there is praise and service here there is a break and a shock at death. You cannot pass from no service and no praise here to service and

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praise in the other world. There is a break between the two lives in such a case. The two lives were meant to be one life. Therefore, I believe that many of you who love life here, but in whose life service and praise are mingled, when your call comes, will pass naturally from the life here to the life there.

Now, the question is how to reconcile the point of view of which I spoke at the beginning and the facts which I have now laid before you, and I find the answer gladly in such an institution as the Lend-a-Hand Club. But in what kind of spirit have you got to work the Club? First of all, keep the right attitude of mind towards the whole subject. I have described my little "anti-Bethnal Greener"; I want you to avoid the anti-Bethnal Green spirit in yourselves, and prevent it growing up among your younger sisters. I am sure that with a little tact at home it is quite possible to avoid boring one's friends with one's little efforts. On the other hand, do not be discouraged by a little cold water. A young friend of mine, when he first began visiting in East London, was always sent round to the stables by his grandmother to be cleaned before he came to the drawing-room. This was not, of course, encouraging, but it should be cheerfully endured. And here comes in the value to the work of a real religion. There is no good without it. There is no good without our prayer being regular and our Communions

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being devout, and without our really asking for the right spirit to do it, and keeping a little time of quiet before the day begins. We must steady ourselves in any case, even if we do not do this work ; but if we do, we must all the more carefully foster our religious life, and so do it in a thoroughly religious spirit. Then, secondly, do not be self-willed about it. After all, if we do these things, we are supposed *ex hypothesi* to do them according to the will of God. I am certain that, if these seven considerations are true, then it is God's will that you should use the gift that you have, and that God wills you to do it. But, then, watch the working of the will of God as seen in the amount of strength you have and the claims of home, and put away all self-will. There is often much self-will about philanthropic and Christian work, in spite of its being in a good cause. Then, thirdly, put in your bit of work according to your gifts. I have read through your reports, and I am much struck by the organisation of your Lend-a-Hand Club, and the business-like way in which it is carried on. Your three divisions exactly touch the three sorts of work we need. There is a great scope for your acting and singing. You can fill any hall in East London with what they call down there a "two-penny dramatic." And I really believe that, if you are able to bring the people out of the public-houses by some counter-attractions, you are doing

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a really good work ; and those of you who may feel no special vocation for teaching in the Sunday-school or in taking Bible-classes are thus using your gifts in your own way. Then, I am very glad to see the section which superintends the visiting. You cannot measure yourselves the value of those visits. It is impossible for you to have an idea of the way in which they cheer up the sick people and the children, whether in the poor districts or in the hospitals. And then there are the lectures. It is a very good thing to have those lectures. Philanthropy is a science now—the knowing exactly what to do, and how to do it in the best way. And, therefore, I am very anxious that you should, in planning it out, plan it out according to your gifts. “As every man has received the gift, let him minister the same.” And then, fourthly, having made up your minds what to do, do it as a part of your religion. There is no good in it otherwise. It is almost dishonouring to God to undertake it, and then throw it over for some invitation which you happen to receive. I remember a very popular man who came down from the midst of West End society to Bethnal Green. When first he came he said that he would give Thursday evening, and I remember that he said to his mother after about six months—so his mother told me, though he did not say anything to me about it himself—“Is it not curious, mother, that all the nicest invitations

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come on 'Thursdays now?" But, still, he never missed a Thursday, as far as I can remember, during the whole of my time in East London. Well, that is the kind of service you must offer, and if you fix upon the piece of service and offer it to God, your promise must be kept, unless it is absolutely impossible. It loses the whole of its sanctity and its power if it is thrown over for that delightful ball unfortunately fixed for Thursday. It must be done as unto God. And, lastly, let there be that beautiful spirit of service which our LORD showed when He went round the disciples with a towel and a basin. What did He mean to teach by doing so? He meant to teach us the kind of spirit in which service should be rendered. It is an honour to be allowed to do it. "May I wash your feet? May I do this humblest act of service for you?" Honour humanity. Honour the poor for their splendid self-sacrifice. Feel that you would not be half so good as they are if you had been in their position. This I constantly feel as I go about. There must be no spirit of patronage, but a spirit of humble, loving service. That must be the spirit and that must be the note of the Lend-a-Hand Club. And so, my sisters, if I may call you so, go forward for many years' work in this Club which you have formed. May God's blessing rest upon it! Live it out in such a spirit as this, and "full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over," shall be given back into your own bosom.

XVII

LIFE *

MY subject is "Life." "What is life?" Do not imagine that I am going to weary you with some foolish definition about life ; and I say "foolish definition" because I, for my part, have never received the slightest help from hearing life defined as "correspondence with your environment." I know the difference between a fish out of water and a fish in water : I have often felt like a fish out of water myself ; but it seems to me that it does no good to cheat us with the idea that we know more what life is because we are told life is correspondence with our environment. Of course it is. But we want to know something more than that.

I am not going to speak scientifically about what life is. It is a tremendous mystery still. I once opened a book in one of our hospitals, and I saw these words : "Sleep is as great a mystery as ever." Surely it is enough to make everyone of

* Address to the Women's Meeting of the Church Congress, Weymouth, October, 1905.

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us very humble about our knowledge to-day when we know that, with all the knowledge we have, no one has any idea of the difference between a dead body and a living person. What I mean by life is what CHRIST meant by life when He said : " I am come that they might have life, and might have it more abundantly." What is it to live in the real, full sense of the word? First of all, we must begin with the physical life. There is nothing at all religious in ignoring the beauty, the dignity, and the glory of physical life. It is a grand thing to be alive at all. You remember what Dante said, and how he described those who were "gloomy, gloomy, in the sweet air gladdened by the sun."

Therefore, do not imagine—and I speak first of all, to the young—that we want you not to enjoy your young life. I was speaking to two hundred London girls not long ago, and I said to them, as I always try to say at such meetings: To be religious we do not want you not to enjoy life. It is your time; to enjoy life is the very thing to do. Only what you must do, and what we are so apt to forget to do, is to thank God for the life which we have. Those nine lepers out of the ten who, as they went, were cleansed, forgot to give thanks. That was the point. The health came back so naturally they forgot from whom it came; and those who are feeling the young blood rushing through their

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veins, and the enjoyment and the abandonment of life ought to be on their knees at His feet, giving thanks. My first answer, then, to "What is life? what is it to live?" is "I breathe." I am alive in God's beautiful world, and therefore physical life comes first.

But it is impossible to stop for a moment at physical life as the answer to what life is. Not only is it true that physical life, enjoyed by itself, leads to many curses which we have in London and elsewhere, to sin, to selfishness and to misery, but to enjoy and cry for and try to preserve physical life as a thing in itself is the most foolish and absurd thing in the world. It is a great thing, and it is possible, to be young all your days. But that is a very different thing from what you see sometimes to-day in life, not only among women, but among men also—namely, the endeavour to keep, by artificial or other means, youth when it has gone. I do not know a more foolish thing than this in a woman except the same thing in a man, as, for instance, when the elderly man tries to be a young buck to the end. Even in such foolish ways as those we see that mere physical life by itself is not life; and if you clutch at it in that manner, you have lost the real thing. No; with physical life there must be, if you are to have true life, a life of thought. Therefore, my second answer is, "I think." There has been in the last twenty-five or fifty years a great increase in

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the intellectual thought of women, and to-day every encouragement is given to women to learn and to think. Yet even now I seem to see a misunderstanding as to what we want. People are afraid still of being called blue-stockings. What we want is not necessarily learned women, though we can do with them; we want thoughtful women, women who think. There are several things which I believe would vanish if we had more of the life of thought among women to-day. One is the playing with a thing like theosophy. In London I see these things taken up, and taken up mainly by women. Yet, if you think really deeply, and think enough, you will see that you cannot believe in re-incarnation and keep your belief in the Incarnation; and therefore you want to think, not less, but more, not to be caught by something which seems novel and therefore attractive, but to think out to what it is going to help you. What I say of theosophy I must say also of Christian science. I have always fully acknowledged that there are two truths in Christian science—namely, the power of the mind over the body, and the sacred character of the healing art; but every heresy has always lived by the element of truth that it has. I can speak of a concrete instance. When a lady told me that if an aged relative whom I know well, who is now eighty-two and failing fast, had been a Christian scientist, he would never have been old, nor ill, and that he

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would never die, all I could say was—well, I gave her some flowers and sent her away. I felt that I really could not trust myself, honestly and politely, to answer such an argument. I want you thinking women to face what that means. I want you to face the question whether it would really be for the best happiness of the human race that that, or any other old man, should never die, that I should never die myself when I became an old man.

I venture to say GOD knows a great deal more about the management of His world than people who criticise His action; and there is a great deal more total weight of happiness in the course of a thousand years from the way He arranges the world than there would be in the way other people would arrange it for Him. The co-existence of old people and the young together—the possibility of the old grandfather nursing his grandchild on his knees—is achieved in the way in which we see the world arranged, and adds to, and does not subtract from, the sum of human happiness. Also, it is a perversion of the teaching of the New Testament to believe that if only we had enough faith we ourselves could always heal those who are ill, and could avoid old age. A poor little child said when her mother had taught her Christian science: “Mother says I think I have got a pain, but I know I have got a pain.” Therefore, without meaning to point the finger of scorn at those who,

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never having appreciated the old Christian teaching, find a new enthusiasm in this new belief, and have found a new light because they have grasped, as they think, a new revelation—without saying a word against them, I do ask thinking women to think out their principles before being led away by Christian science.

Again, if theosophy and Christian science want more thought, so, I believe (and this is a more homely piece of advice), we should be saved from unhappy marriages by more thought. My experience in London—and I look round on a wide field—is that half the unhappy marriages come from there being no community of thought between those who are married, and who, therefore, are not real companions at all. How can they be companions if a woman who is not thoughtful marries a thoughtful man? I remember saying this to a woman, and she said: "It is the men who never think." That may be so; but my point is that if a woman does not live a life of thought, and is not interested in what interests the husband, they drift apart. I remember at one Church Congress women's meeting getting into very hot water for saying that all married people ought to take a fortnight's holiday apart from one another; but seeing, as I do, that some married people seem to take all their holidays away from one another, I retract my advice and say they had better spend their holidays together. I have given, then, the

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second answer to my question, "What is life?" and that is, "I *think*."

But is it enough to say, "I breathe, I think"? Is that full life? I do not think anyone is less useful in the world than the coldly intellectual woman. There is something you expect from a woman in even greater measure than you expect it from a man. Of course, you must add to "I breathe, I think," "I love," if you want to live. Was it not Browning who said, "Life is just the chance of learning love"? There are some of you who come from happy homes, with children round them, members of large families, where family life is one of the great happinesses and joys of their life; but you lonely ones, do not imagine that you are cut off from this joy of learning love. Do you suppose the sister, or the deaconess, or the clergyman's daughter, who toils among the poor by herself, does not know what love is? Not know what love is! Why, the very boys of the parish love her; the children love her; all the old women of the parish rise up and call her blessed.

Therefore, I am speaking, when I place love as the third element of a true life, of something which is within the reach of everyone. There may be someone who feels that life is a very poor thing—a very empty thing. I will tell you the reason, my sister. I have no doubt about it. You have never given yourself away to anything

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or anybody. You are living an isolated life, a self-centred life, a self-conscious life. Give yourself away and you will find new joy in life. Give and it shall be given you back into your bosom—full measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over.

Fourthly, in love, serve. It was not for nothing that our great Master took the basin and towel and went round and washed the feet of His disciples. It was to teach us that to have true life we must have that fourth element of service. It always seems to me that the Church Congress is a great call to service. I am not now down here speaking on behalf of East London, as I was the last time I was here, and therefore I do not say: "Come up and work at one of the settlements in East London or in the poor parts of London" (although we shall not refuse you if you do that). What I do say is: "Look round these country villages—look round these towns from which you come, and ask yourselves, Is there nothing I might do for JESUS CHRIST in His Church? Am I serving? Are there none lonely whom I could go and cheer? Are there no children I could teach on Sunday? Is there no good cause which I can help? Is there no poor clergyman's wife breaking down from overwork to whom I could give a hand in little things?" Remember that the washing of the feet meant that the smallest and the most unnoticed thing would be

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accepted by JESUS CHRIST Himself. "What is life?"—"I *breathe*, I *think*, I *love*, I *serve*."

If you have not served you have not lived; and lastly, you have not lived if you do not pray. I wonder whether there are any of you who really do not pray, who have what my dear friend Canon Newbolt called "the insomnia of prayerlessness," who are restless, who feel somehow that they are not full of the true life, and who, in a vague kind of way, want to be good, but feel that there is nothing in them to pass on. Of course, none of us have anything until we have received it. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above. Do not let those haunting doubts keep you from prayer. Face them. Do not let that busy life of yours keep you from prayer. Your life is no good unless it is worked out in the Spirit of GOD; therefore, do add that fifth element to the true life—add earnest, humble prayer. And if you take up such a life as that and say, "Yes, I will try to live; I will breathe, think, love, serve, and pray," your life will be the life of Heaven begun on earth; and from such a life you will pass without a break into the life beyond the grave.

Sermons on Special Occasions

XVIII

THE SPIRITUAL PLOUGHMAN *

"No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of Gon."—ST. LUKE ix. 62.

THERE are many metaphors and similes in the New Testament which for their understanding require a special knowledge of the country in which the words were spoken ; and we can scarcely overrate the debt which we owe to all the sober critics and great scholars who interpret every year more and more clearly to us the great book which we call the Bible. But this particular metaphor is one that appeals at once to an agricultural people like ourselves. Ploughing was done, it is true, in a slightly different way in Palestine from the way in which it is done in our country, but for all intents and purposes the characteristics of the ploughman remain the same. In the first place, it is true of his work, if of any work, that "it is dogged that does it," to use an old proverb. He has to go on hour after hour, and seeing little

* Preached in Westminster Abbey for the East London Church Fund, November, 1904.

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apparent result of his work at all. The man who passes down the road in the early morning, and sees him start upon his work, is almost surprised to find the same man still ploughing in the same field, and with apparently so little result of his work. He has to be a man of dogged perseverance. In the second place, he has to go on—and he does go on—whether the weather is fine or the reverse. It is certainly easier for him when the weather is good, but it makes no difference to his work. He may begin with the sunshine in the early morning, but the clouds may gather at noon, and he may finish his work in mist and rain. But the ploughman steadily ploughs on, whether the sun or whether the rain fall upon him through the day. And then, again, the ploughman not only must never look back, but he must never look on one side or the other. In order to plough his furrow quite clean and perfectly direct, he must be wholly bent, wholly intent upon his work. It is not too easy to plough well, and the ploughman who knows his work looks steadily ahead, that he may keep the furrow straight. And, fourthly—and in some respects most touching and trying of all when we understand the application—the ploughman ploughs wholly in hope. He practically sees nothing, and perhaps never will see anything, of the work that he does. As he ploughs on hour after hour there is a picture, ever cheering him, of something in which he, perhaps, never

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will take part ; and that is the gathering in of the great harvest. There is a song ever in his ears which, perhaps, he will never hear,—the song of the harvest-home.

Now, it is quite certain that our LORD JESUS CHRIST, who never used His words or His metaphors lightly, meant a great deal by comparing the work of the Gospel to the work of the ploughman at the plough. What He must have meant was this : that all those four characteristics which we have seen to be essential to the ploughman were also essential to the work of the Gospel. We were to be—I had almost said they were to be, but *we* were to be, for every single baptized member of the Church had his infant hand placed upon the plough at his baptism—we were to be men of dogged determination ; we were to be men who went on whether the sun shone upon us — the sunshine of popular favour—or the cold rain and mist of hostile criticism ; we were to be men who never looked to the right hand or to the left ; who did not say to ourselves in the middle of our work “I am sorry I was ordained,” or “I am sorry I took those responsibilities upon me again at my confirmation” ; who never looked back or looked to the one side or to the other for more comfort in life, or easier circumstances, but who are wholly bent upon this one thing ; who sought the kingdom of God and His righteousness, in simple faith that all other things would be added

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to them. And, above all, we were to be men of unbounded hope. Ever as we worked something was to be before us—a picture which, perhaps, we should never see—and ever ringing in our ears a song which on earth, perhaps, we should never hear: that picture the picture of a redeemed humanity, and that song the song of the eternal harvest-home.

You will readily understand why this metaphor seems so appropriate when I plead with you for the work of the Church in the great field of work in East London. And perhaps it is specially appropriate when we have been hearing of recent years some very drastic criticism applied to the condition of the Church in that great district. We have had pointed out to us, not at all by hostile critics, how very few at present in our great population go either to church or to chapel; and that you may visit some East London church on a Sunday morning, and find it not more than half-full of people. And I think the feeling of many in this end of London may be expressed in the words of a light-hearted officer who visited me in Bethnal Green, and who, as we parted at the corner of the slum district which I was going to visit during the afternoon, said, "I cannot think how you fellows can go on day after day visiting like this, week after week, year in and year out. It does not do any good, you know, when you have done it."

I confess, then, there is what I believe to be a rather prevalent feeling of pessimism about the

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work of the Church in our great districts. And I speak not so much in my own person, but as representing those spiritual ploughmen who are giving their lifetime, the best years of their life, to ploughing up and down the great field of East London. I was one Sunday morning in the church of such a one, who has given twenty years—the best twenty years of his life—to working in that district, and who refuses every chance offered him of leaving it for another sphere of work. Now, what would such a spiritual ploughman say if he stood here in this pulpit to-day to answer to the criticisms which might be passed on his work? He would say, first, that you have no sort of idea of the amount of work which the plough has to do before you can even speak of sowing the seed, and still less of reaping the harvest; that when a great population has been long—too long—herded together, overworked and overworried, with scarcely time sometimes to think of anything except their daily bread, has lived much too long without the means of grace, growing up generation after generation with no one ever thinking of going to church at all, with the unbeliever scattering seeds of unbelief among the population, then you have a surface, you have a field of such stiff and consistent indifference and apathy that it requires years of ploughing before the seed can enter at all. And he would say that he was content to see comparatively little results

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because he was the ploughman, and that while he sowed the seed as well and as far as he could, his main business was to plough up the apathy and indifference he found, and so make it possible for the next generation to sow the seed. And as I watched for fifteen years, at close quarters, those ploughmen at their work, I have seen over and over again that mass of indifference and apathy broken up. The whole tone of the district is quite different from what it was, in its attitude towards the Gospel, even fifteen years ago. And the spiritual ploughman knows what he is doing in his work for the kingdom of God.

Secondly, he would say that although at present it is but broken patches that are prepared for the sowing, yet the harvest which can be seen on these patches that are clear gives a glorious promise for the morrow. Many churches in East London on festivals are crammed to the doors. In several there are five hundred steadfast and regular communicants, although nearly one hundred communicants leave the parish every year. And, I suppose, you could find no more fruitful patch of ground in the whole kingdom of God for fruitfulness in self-sacrifice, in generosity, in keenness, in faith and love, than a gathering of five hundred East End communicants, who, in spite of their overwork, in spite of their worry, set an example to the whole Church of faithfulness and zeal in their calling. And you will certainly find no

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churches which are more crowded with faithful men and women than those churches in growing London supported by the East London Church Fund, and planted by Bishop Walsham How in the growing parts of Tottenham and Edmonton. And therefore this spiritual ploughman points to the patches which are worked and are already fruitful as a promise for the future.

His next appeal is to the history of Christianity in Europe. Who converted Europe? The brilliant orators or the great scholars? They did their part, and a noble part, no doubt. But it is the men who did what we call, in our own parlance, the spade-work, or the ploughman's work, who converted Europe—the unknown good who rest in God's still memory.

“The bravely dumb who did their deed,
But scorned to blot it with a name;
Men of the plain, heroic breed,
Who loved Heaven's silence more than fame.”

Those are the men who converted Europe; those are the men who will convert London to-day.

And, lastly, the spiritual ploughman will point to the hope which lies before him. It is true that even those children in his Band of Hope or in his Children's Guild may not become the convinced, steadfast Churchmen and Churchwomen, all of them, which he longs to see them. Those boys in the Church Lads' Brigade may go down under the steady pressure of the apathy and indifference

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which they will still find at home. But it is to their grandchildren, their great-grandchildren, it is the future to which he looks ; it is the ages to come for which he is working. For then he hopes that there will be not only a decent home, instead of a hovel, for the children of GOD to live in ; not only a fair day's wage for a fair day's work, but a kingdom of GOD, where the laws of the kingdom, the law of worship, the law of purity, the laws of righteousness, shall be binding and moulding the people of GOD. And he lives and he dies for this. You will find some of those men, the latchets of whose shoes I feel myself unworthy to unloose, who have worked, and worked their lifetime in East London. You will find them dead by their ploughs, with a smile on their faces, because they see a land which is very far off.

And therefore it is not so much for them that I plead ; I come to ask who is to have the honour of cheering them on at their work ? I would ask you first about your soul, quite apart from East London. If no man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of GOD, what about your own spiritual lives ? Are you set upon the kingdom of GOD in your homes, in society ? Or do you look back from your early faith under the stress of a friend's scepticism or a friend's unbelief ? Have you looked back under the moral pressure of a mere gospel of comfort in the comfortable homes from which you come ?

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Or are you trying, however humbly, under whatever difficulties, to set a firm, clear, patient witness, so that first of all, beyond everything else, you seek the kingdom of God? And then, coming back to the spiritual ploughmen of East London, you are surely not going to leave them to faint from despair. It would be nothing else than a national disgrace if again ten per cent. had to be taken from the salaries of the curates of East London, as it had to be taken ten years ago, to meet the similar deficit which lies upon the Fund to-day. But, further, can none of you go and walk by their side down there? One after another, families have left West London, and gone to settle in the East End. Often it is a widow and her daughter, a young husband and his wife; and in no single case have I seen a family leave the West End and settle in the East without a great blessing upon the sacrifice, and without their finding the truth of the promise of the Gospel: "He that loseth his life shall find it."

And so I give you this message: "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Before the time when the glorious opportunity passes away, God grant that in our own humble way we may all have some part in ploughing the great field, that so we may have our part at last in the harvest song, when those that plough and those that sow and those that reap shall rejoice together.

XIX

“FEAR GOD. HONOUR THE KING”*

“Fear God. Honour the King.”—1 PET. ii. 17.

“**F**EAR GOD. Honour the King.” It is natural that on the anniversary of the King’s accession our thoughts should go back over the eventful years since the accession of our Sovereign to the Throne. Who can forget how deeply the heart of the nation was stirred when the late Queen died? I shall never forget myself the crowds which thronged St. Paul’s Cathedral every week-day, as well as Sunday, for weeks; when the nation’s heart was stirred it turned to the old cathedral at its centre for comfort and for strength. Who can forget in the following year the joyful anticipation of the Coronation, or the awful shock when we heard that it would not take place? Never shall I forget the awed silence in Westminster Abbey when it fell to my lot to

* Preached in St. Saviour’s, Paddington, on the anniversary of the King’s accession, 1905, in the presence of the Mayor and Corporation of Paddington.

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announce there that the Coronation would not take place. Then the anxious expectations, the prayers that were offered up, and the answer to our prayers, and the Coronation which at last was found possible, and the thanksgiving at St. Paul's ! And who that was present at it will forget the thanksgiving service for peace in South Africa, and the tears that fell down the cheeks of old veteran soldiers at that great service ? And then, coming down to more recent times, remember those happy visits of our Sovereign to foreign Powers, which have contributed, perhaps, more than anything else to the peace of Europe. Flattery is repellent to the subject of it, and degrading to those who use it ; and therefore I purposely understate the case when I say that our Sovereign, by the cool courage which he displayed in the face of imminent death, his countless acts of kindness to the poor, his steady support of hospitals and other philanthropic institutions in our midst, and his tact and wisdom in dealing with foreign countries, has constantly grown during those years in the esteem and love of his people. And therefore we do pray from our hearts, “God save the King.” I plead that these State prayers, as we call them, shall not be empty forms day by day and Sunday by Sunday, but that we shall really appeal for grace and help for him in his difficult work. May he live long, girded by something better than Imperial grandeur—girded with the love and devotion of a free people.

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But, after all, "Honour the King" is no mere personal command. These words were written when Nero was Emperor of Rome—a man whom no one could personally honour at all ; and therefore the very fact that they were used when the world had such a King shows that they teach some principle of the government of the world which is independent of the personal attributes of any particular Sovereign. And what they convey is this : that the God of order, the God whose creation in Nature works like a machine, desires to see settled authority and settled government for the rule of His people. And, therefore, when we have in the country or in a borough a settled authority, a settled government, our duty as citizens is part of our duty to God.

Now, may I point out what a splendid ideal this imparts to local municipal life and citizenship? It is one thing to get on a local council to safeguard one's own interests, or even to pass away time which lies heavy on our hands, or even to indulge a taste for municipal work : it is another thing to come on to that council as an agent and a minister of God. It is one thing to utter the prayer with which most council meetings are begun, but another to make it a reality, and to conduct every meeting and discussion with the sense of the Presence of God brooding over you. "The powers that be are ordained of God." Then you do God's work in your borough council's work.

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And, if you think over the work that falls to your care, you will realise what a splendid work it may be. Take only three branches of it. Take the great powers which you have for advancing the public morality of London. As Chairman of the Public Morality Council of London, a council which includes representatives of the great Non-conformist bodies, of the Roman Catholic and Jewish communities, I desire to acknowledge that we receive the greatest possible help from the Metropolitan Borough Councils. We leave the task of suppressing bad houses and rendering morality easier for the young with confidence to your care. What a Godlike work it is, to make London a purer and better place for the next generation than it is to-day !

Then think of the evils of overcrowding, and of your powers with regard to the housing question. How GOD must long to see in this great City better and purer homes for His people and a better chance in every home for the poor children who grow up in those homes ! Or, take again those powers which you now have for shortening the hours of labour in the shops. We have lately had a most encouraging conference on this subject in the City, and the shopkeepers, I find, were as keen, quite as keen, as their assistants to have those hours shortened. But what a splendid work this is—to prevent the dwindling of the physique among the thousands of young

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men—yes, and of young women—in our shops to-day; to give them more time for rational amusement and recreation of their minds as well as of their bodies; to break the chains which have bound them too long, and let the oppressed go free! When we say “Honour the King” we mean honour the authority derived from the King, in whatever council or assembly it may be.

And yet, of course, it must be perfectly clear that “Honour the King” must follow “Fear God.” There are some who contend to-day, and certainly with some show of reason, that the fear of God is dying out in our country. They point, for instance, to those statistics about London which have been recently put before us. They point to the fact that only eighteen in every hundred, according to two reckonings, go either to church or chapel. They point to the growing secularisation of Sunday, to the numbers of men who used to go to church with their boys, but who now spend every Sunday on some golf-links or away from church in their own homes. They point to the cheating in business and the lying in trade. They point to that cheap agnosticism which affects so many of our magazines and so much of our literature to-day, and they assure us from signs like those that the fear of God is dying out in our midst.

I take no such pessimistic view. It is quite true that conventional Christianity is breaking up;

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that people no longer come to church because it is the thing to do. The very fact that they are not driven by public opinion to church may result in time in a more genuine and real religion. We do not want men in church who come there merely as a salve to public opinion. Gideon fought his battle, not with a great multitude nor even with three thousand, but with three hundred who were out and out in earnest. Therefore, we would rather build the Church of London—and I use the word “Church” in the widest sense—on the eighteen out of the hundred who come to church because they are in dead earnest, for we shall thereby build in the end a stronger and more permanent Church.

So, again, it is true in some sense (and this is another point that is urged) that reverence for parents is dying out in the young ; but, after all, the lad who slips his hand into his father’s arm instead of bowing to him as our forefathers did need have no less reverence and love for his father than those who had almost a fear and terror of their father in the days of old. And, as for the cheaper agnosticism of the day, if I mistake not, it is making us Christians test our faith : it whets our faith, makes us keener in finding out the grounds on which we believe ; and from this training of trial and probation there will emerge a truer and stronger and purer faith.

And so I would rather turn round the question,

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and, instead of discussing the abstract query, "Is the fear of God dying out of the country?" I would say, "Is it dying out of you?" Take a few tests in determining that question. What about your prayers? Do you begin every day by kneeling down and paying your reverence to that holy, awful Being in whom you profess to believe, who is about your path and about your bed, and sees all you do? If you have neglected to pray to God, and to do reverence and homage to Him, how can you expect the fear of God not to die out in you? Or, take another case: You are doing something in your business or private life of which you think nobody knows. But is God nobody? We have all heard of the story of the little boy who watched his father about to commit a theft. He thought his boy was too young to see what he did, but before he did it he looked first of all behind him, then to the right hand, then to the left, to see that no one was watching; but the little boy said, "Father, there was one way you didn't look." "What was that, my boy?" asked the father. "You never looked up," rejoined the boy. God was "nobody" to this man intent on a theft.

The second test I would ask you to apply to your life, as I will try to apply it to mine, is this: Is there something which I am doing, deliberately doing, against my conscience, which is known to God, and do I fear God and reverence God

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enough to give that thing up? Apart from any sin, how much is God's loving Face a reality to you and me every day? When we say “ Fear GOD,” the fear we have in our minds is not that of the slave for a tyrant, but fear consistent with the deepest love—the sort of fear we have of shaming some dear mother who loves us. Anyone we would rather meet than such a mother, if as a son we had done something to make her ashamed of us. That is the fear we want to have of GOD. How much is GOD a reality in our lives day by day?

I would speak, then, to two classes among you : first, to those who are conscious that there is far less fear and love of GOD in them than there used to be. I say, Come back to GOD, come back. Look at the stars. Go and ask who made those glorious stars, and be certain that there is a GOD. Look into conscience. Listen to what conscience says, and be certain that He is a righteous GOD. Open your New Testament again. Read that marvellous life, the personality of JESUS CHRIST. Hear Him say, “ He that hath seen Me hath seen the FATHER,” and then realise the love of GOD. Put yourself into communion with Him. Bend those stiff knees in prayer again. Come back to His house, which, perhaps, you have deserted for months and even years ; and then there will steal into your heart the fear and love of GOD !

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And for you who do believe, you the earnest and devout Christian, my last word is for you. What steps are you taking to spread the fear of God in your parish? Do you suppose that the clergy are sufficient in number to spread the fear of God in the crowded population of this parish? Souls have to be won, and have to be saved. I can hardly imagine a better thanksgiving offering than to supply your parish with at least one other worker for God.

XX

THE BLESSING IN THE CLUSTER*

"The new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it."—Isa. lxxv. 8.

NOTHING is sadder than the waste of young life which goes on in our great cities to-day. Even physically the boy life, which might be so strong and healthy, is destroyed, and becomes a weak and feeble thing. It is quite pathetic to take down into the country a cricket eleven of East London boys of sixteen or seventeen, and find them outgrown by lads of thirteen and fourteen who have good food and country air, simply because the boys of the slums have never had a chance. At the time of the South African War the nation woke up to find that in the slums of its great cities there was growing up a population physically unfit, however willing in spirit, to defend the country.

But the physical waste is only a symbol of the

* Preached in St. Paul's Cathedral for the Gordon Boys' Home at Woking, June, 1905.

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moral waste. When boys are brought up amid scenes of drunkenness, and sometimes in haunts of vice, accustomed to sights and sounds which the children of the upper classes have never heard of, still less actually seen and heard, what wonder if their moral standard becomes low, and the quick oath and the filthy jest become almost a second nature? The following incident is taken at random from the daily press: "Peeping through the chink in a shutter of a room adjoining a refreshment-house on a Sunday evening, a detective sergeant saw a number of lads playing cards. When he suddenly raided the room, he found fifteen boys and young men, their ages ranging from thirteen to twenty-three, gambling at 'banker,' money being scattered over the tables round which they were gathered. A panic followed the detective's entrance, chairs and tables were overturned, and one boy escaped through a window. One juvenile gamester stated that the refreshment-house keeper charged each boy one penny per half-hour for the use of the table, and every half-hour he collected the pennies. Any lad unable to pay was turned out. 'Sometimes we remained there playing all day long,' stated the youth at the London police-court." And when men inquire into the spiritual habits of this overcrowded city, I for one am not in the least surprised that they report that those whose fathers and grandfathers have never entered a church or

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chapel, except to be baptized or married or buried, seem to have the spiritual instinct dead within them.

Nor, again, I confess, do I feel much surprise that those who have never lived in such places as East London take often a very pessimistic view of the future. When gangs gather with their war-whoop and their belts, and are not always careful to confine the use of those belts to one another; and when all that is seen by a passer-by is rough and vulgar horse-play, accompanied by language not of the most refined, everyone must admit that there is nothing very lovely or attractive at first sight about the boyhood of our slums. There is little wonder that the press calls from time to time for more police and a firmer hand, and that, as with the unpromising-looking cluster of grapes of which the prophet speaks in the text, there seems nothing to do but to sweep it away altogether. The policeman, the prison, and the treadmill would seem to some to be the only cure.

But for many years now the voice of CHRIST has been speaking through His followers—and, thank GOD, our Church at least in this has taken no backward place—and has given the old command with a new meaning to the world with regard to this very boyhood of the slums: "Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it." Behind the fighting propensity and often coarse violence of the "rough" there lurks a spirit and courage which will save a regiment; behind the

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vulgar horse-play is an energy that will advance a nation ; deep down beneath the studied appearance of indifference to any high motive lives a chivalry which will win one day the Victoria Cross ; under the rough exterior experience shows that there is a heart as soft as that of a little child ; and never wholly lost, whatever the world thinks, is the instinct of prayer and the cry for God.

I am speaking now of things that I have seen at close quarters. No one can see the working even of a good boys' club in East London—to say nothing for the moment of the far more effective work of the Gordon Boys' Home—without being convinced of the wonderful gifts and graces which underlie the boy-life of the slums. I have seen night after night those whom the world would have considered likely to be centres of disorder themselves the orderly and responsible officials of their own club ; I have seen, and can see to-day, friendships founded on trust and respect formed between those very lads who seem so unruly in the streets and the University men who live and work among them. I have seen springs of chivalry opened again and again by ladies who have once won their confidence ; and those springs of chivalry, once unsealed, have flowed on in a higher and purer love for sister and for future wife. I have seen seventy or eighty of these lads drinking in every note of music in an oratorio. And, best of all, I have preached time

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after time in great churches crowded with the boys of East London, and found them as silent and attentive a congregation, and capable of joining as reverently in a service, as the congregation which worships in St. Paul's Cathedral every Sunday morning.

"Destroy it not ; for a blessing is in it," then, is an under-statement of the truth. As the new wine is found in the cluster, and yet needs the crushing and the straining and the purifying to set it free, so there is a blessing and a power and a sweetness in this cluster which, if we bring to it the work and the alchemy of faith and hope and love, shall flow down the ages a blessing to the nation, a blessing to the Church, and a blessing to the generations which are yet to come.

Now, it was not the least claim of General Gordon to his deathless fame that he was one of the first to awake the country to this Divine and beautiful truth. Just as Edward Denison went down to live in East London and became the pioneer of East London settlements, so Gordon began what was then pioneer work at Gravesend with what he called his "kings." Nothing struck me so much, when a young man, on reading the first accounts of Gordon's life, which appeared some twenty years ago, as the way in which he devoted himself to those boys, with an unselfish care and whole-hearted affection which was most rare and touching. He followed them

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about the world, you will remember, after they had left his immediate care, by placing flags on a map of the world, each flag representing where one of his boys had gone to live in after-life. Such a picture gives at once the real secret of success. No organisation is of the slightest good unless it is worked with something more than mere external interest. There must be men who are working, whether clergymen or laymen, who have caught the spirit of CHRIST, who love the lads with something more than human love, who are willing to bear a stifling atmosphere, long evenings after busy days, with no hope of any earthly reward; but simply for the Divine pleasure of seeing the rough exterior softened, and from beneath it well forth, for the good of the world, the most beautiful thing to see, because the rarest thing in the world to see (for, as has been truly said, the reserve of a boy is ten times deeper than the reserve of a maid)—a boy's trust, a boy's chivalry, and a boy's religion.

And so, when that fell and yet glorious day came upon England when Gordon died—over twenty years ago—a day when the heart of the country seemed to stand still, and the memory of which has lasted on, with all its sweetness and bitterness, in a way which few things last on in our swift and crowded life, it was none the less an inspiration from God because the judgment of the man of the world thought it the obvious thing

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to do that a Gordon Boys' Home should commemorate one of the truest friends boys ever had, and that Gordon's "kings" should have successors while England remains a nation. There is no time now to describe the first beginning of the Gordon Boys' Home, or to enlarge upon the way in which first the late Queen and the present King and Queen have supported it from the very beginning; nor is it possible in detail to describe how naturally it has become the centre of other memorials and the recipient of other gifts—the gymnasium being given in memory of one of Gordon's most valued friends, General Hichens, the beautiful chapel in memory of the Duke of Clarence, the hospital in memory of Herbert Stewart by one friend of the Home, the swimming-bath by another, £4,000 for dormitories by another, £10,000 towards the buildings by another. But what I would point out in the short time I have is the perfect adaptation of the Gordon Boys' Home to achieve the aim of Gordon, and save, and not destroy, the blessing in the cluster.

It was a bright and sunny day when I visited the Gordon Boys' Home some years ago, and its beautiful situation on the rising ground above Woking was seen to the best advantage. Going straight from the slums to Bagshot Heath was coming into a new world. Instead of the fetid atmosphere of a crowded court I breathed the pure air of God's own heaven. It would have been im-

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possible to have found 240 boys living a happier or busier life. Instead of sulking or scowling or fighting at the street-corner, there was not a sullen or scowling face to be seen or found in the whole little colony. I passed from one busy scene in it to another. The numbers and the distribution of the boys were about the same as they are to-day. Thirty-three were learning carpentry, twenty-two were engineers, twenty-four were learning gardening, sixty were being trained to play in bands, nineteen were saddlers, twenty-four were shoemakers, twenty-five were learning tailoring, two were monitors in the school, three were baking, three were cooking, and twenty-four, whose tastes and lines were not discovered, were making themselves useful in other ways. I felt that I had passed from the slumland of man to the dreamland of God. This was Gordon's dream for them being worked out in actual life. Here was the bright boyhood which God had made given its chance at last. As everyone had received a gift, he had a chance of developing it, and using it for the good of the world. Nor was it a question of mere technical training. Good men of proved character moved constantly among them. There was discipline and strict rule, but it was the discipline and rule of a good home. You might give Browning's aphorism a new meaning: "All's love, but all's law." Nor was this all. In the tactful management and personal influence of a manly chaplain, who joined in their

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games and made their life his own, the religious instinct once buried came to life again. No one could ask for a more reverent congregation to preach to. And I saw in the last report that, while the religious convictions of each are carefully respected, of the Church of England boys (who form 90 per cent. of the whole) 113 were confirmed in their own chapel by the Bishop of Winchester in April of 1904.

But, of course, it may be asked, What of their after-life, when they leave this healthful, wholesome home for the rough life of the world again? Does it have a permanent effect upon their character? The Home can report that out of 457 replies to inquiries as to the character of the boys who have left for the Army or Navy, the Royal Marines, the Cape Mounted Rifles, the Canadian Artillery, or for civil employment, 129 were pronounced "Exemplary," 214 "Very good," 86 "Good," 18 "Fair," 7 "Indifferent," and only 3 "Bad."

It is, then, for the work of this Home I plead now in St. Paul's Cathedral. It is to this cathedral we come in our joys and griefs as a nation; it is to this cathedral we ought to look for carrying on what was at any rate once a nation's longing. The nation did long with a great longing twenty years ago to commemorate Gordon; it longed to keep his memory an undying memory in the heart of the nation's life.

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Men woke at night twenty years ago to wonder whether the relief column would be in time, and it was not only women, but strong men, who sobbed with grief and shame when Gordon died. Now, it is dishonouring to a nation to be like an emotional and fickle woman, and to forget its deepest moments of mingled shame and pride ; it means a change for the worse in national character if a deep and serious and reasoned purpose to commemorate Gordon in Gordon's way evaporates in twenty years. And yet, incredible as it may seem, it is a struggle to get together the £5,000 or £6,000 a year needed to work the Home. It is to join in that glorious work I invite you. There is no work which more manifestly has a blessing in it ; there is no work whose destruction would be more wanton or more cruel ; no work, I believe, is nearer to the heart of God, none more entirely in accordance with the spirit of CHRIST. "Destroy it not ; for a blessing is in it," sounds with a new significance as we watch it going on before our eyes. I can scarcely tell you my (I hope) honest pride, as the late head of the Oxford House, when I was told by the present chaplain at Khartoum that the boys who stood round him now in all his labours among the soldiers, who entered into all his work and responded to his efforts, were the boys who had been trained in the boys' club in Bethnal Green, and who were last summer with their regiments at Khartoum. We of the

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Oxford House felt as if in some small way we had been led to take a part in Gordon's work. That surely honest pride may be yours—nay, it may be yours to share the work of a greater than Gordon; “for the Son of man is not come”—and the self-restraint and simplicity of the words give them their grandeur—“the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.”

XXI

THE POWER OF RECOVERY*

"He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."—ST. JOHN xi. 25.

THE message of Easter is the power of recovery. No cause seemed so hopelessly past recovery as the cause of Christianity when CHRIST lay dead in the tomb. Every spiritual force had been put forth in its support, so it seemed; and every force had failed. There had been lived the most spotless life ever lived on earth, and it had been met with furious hatred and opposition. Miracles had been seen on earth that had never been seen before or since. But it was said, "He casteth out devils through Beelzebub, the prince of devils." Thousands had hung upon His lips, and it was thought that at last the great Prophet had arrived to whom the world would listen. But spotless life, supernatural power, and miraculous preaching, had all ended

* Preached after the consecration of the new portion of Wakefield Cathedral, erected in memory of Bishop Walsham How, Easter, 1905.

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in the tomb. No wonder that with a great sigh, when the Creed is sung in our cathedrals, the music sinks at this point to the deepest note of gloom with the words, "He was crucified, and was buried."

And yet what is the meaning of the long trumpet notes that follow as if the Judgment Day was coming? They are not the notes of judgment, but of unexpected joy. "On the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures." The world was wrong, after all; the scoff of the victorious enemy was premature; the few faithful friends who hoped against hope were only wrong in not hoping enough. In the midst of death there had been the promise of life all the time. Though He was dead (and the spear-thrust proved that for all time), yet He lived, and with a power of recovery which has been the wonder of the world ever since, He sprang, not only to life, but to victorious life. Just as Nature at this time of the year springs, not only to life, but to victorious life, and "the winter is over and gone, and the time of the singing of birds has come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land,"* so the LORD of Nature had not crept back to the feeble life of a wounded man, but had sprung to life for ever and ever more. Now, there never was a time when the Easter message of the power of recovery displayed by CHRIST and passed on to the Christian Church,

* The Song of Songs.

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and to every Christian in it, was more needed than it is to-day. There is a very determined, and, if I mistake not, a growingly determined, opposition to supernatural truth altogether, and especially to the revealed facts which constitute the Christian religion. There is, in some parts of England, a bitter feeling against the Church of England, even among those who share the greater part of the Creed with us. A considerable number have been much depressed by books like Mr. Charles Booth's and others who try to estimate the Christian forces of our great cities. Not a few fail to see the use of such a cathedral as this as the centre of the diocese. The division of the Church into two great parties, often very imperfectly understanding each other, depresses others, and the consciousness, partly, no doubt, true, that it is easy enough for the spiritual life to grow very low, even among the clergy, has led many to say that we sorely need another Pentecost in the Church to-day.

Let me ring in your ears, then, the glorious promise of Easter—"He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." Look back upon the history of the Church during the past fifty years, and see if the promise has not been kept. With all that can be said about excesses here or defects there, is not the difference wonderful between the dull and infre-

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quent service of fifty years ago and the outpouring of life and energy which is seen in parish after parish, of every school of thought, in any part of England which you like to examine?

Or take the life of our cathedrals. The aged Dean of St. Paul's was describing to me not long ago the state of things he found there thirty-four years ago—a few choirmen only in attendance at the service, thirty people present on Sunday morning, and a few more in the evening. The choir alone was used. The whole place was described to him at the time by one of the officials as an Augean stable, which it would be impossible to cleanse. But go to the service now any Sunday morning and you will find thousands present, the singing unsurpassed, as the great French composer Gounod acknowledged, in the whole of Europe, and a glorious outpouring of worship and praise sent up to God. But what is more remarkable still than this is the hundreds present at every week-day service throughout the year ; or, again, the way in which at times of national grief, as at Queen Victoria's death, the whole building is thronged from morning till night. Then deny, if you can, the power of recovery transmitted by the great Founder of the Church. As Archbishop Temple said—and he was not one to say courtly things—"When I saw St. Paul's as an undergraduate, I said—young Radical that I was—'Sweep the whole thing away,' but I have

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learned that reform is better than revolution, and it is now the joy of the whole earth." Or, take East London before Bishop Walsham How went down into it. I have spoken to many clergy who were working there before he went—and no doubt there were many instances of splendid and devoted lives in those far-off days—but all those who knew East London best, and worked hardest in those days, acknowledge most readily and most heartily what East London owes to that loving, devoted, and inspired servant of GOD. East London "recovered" under Bishop Walsham How; the isolated workers were drawn together into a loving brotherhood; the disheartened were cheered. "Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees," he cried, as he went from parish to parish, and at the magic touch, learnt from his Master, East London sprang to life, and once again "the power of recovery" was seen in the Church of CHRIST.

Or, again, let me ask you to note the spirit of the revival which has been shown in the South, and in all probability also in the North. All the most careful observers agree that the Welsh revival has been a great reality. There must have been a power at work which for two months kept some ten thousand people daily in the Albert Hall; and as for the humbler efforts which we have done our best to foster in the West End churches in London, I can only say

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that the astonishing response was a rebuke to my own weak faith, and I can only quote the words of one whom we know and love so much in London, Canon Body: "There has not been such a Lent in London for twenty-five years."

It is, then, with certainties like these before your eyes that I ask you to face the problem which is disturbing so many minds to-day. Are we to be dismayed by the wave of scepticism with regard to anything beyond the scope of the senses which certainly does sweep over many in the immediate present? My own belief is this—that anything is better than indifference. It is, on the whole, a good thing for the young of both sexes to be forced early to face their own first principles, and to take a definite side one way or the other in the great battle. "He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Let us test our principles at once in action. CHRIST, if He rose from the dead, dieth no more. Death hath no more dominion over Him, and the question of belief becomes no longer an acceptance of dead dogmas, but of loyalty to the living CHRIST, a belief in whom, in all His power and love, the Creeds have safeguarded from age to age until the present day. How does it stand with you now? "He that is not with Me is against Me, and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth." On which side are you—with Him or

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against Him? gathering or scattering? Make up your minds. The presence of unbelief in our midst whets the keenness of the Christian, just as the baptism of fire whets the keenness of the soldier. Is there no GOD? Then, who made the heavens? Can a box of letters throw themselves into a play of Shakespeare? Then the atoms of the universe can throw themselves into the universe, but not before. Was there no CHRIST? Then, why did Tacitus say He was put to death when Pilate was Procurator? Why did Lecky say that the record of those three short years had done more to regenerate mankind than all the efforts of statesmen and all the disquisitions of philosophers? Did He not rise from the dead? Then, was the Christian Church started by the sight of a dead peasant on the cross? Do you keep your weekly rest on Saturday? If on Sunday, why? What happened on Sunday? If CHRIST never rose again, you would be keeping Friday, the day of His death.

And so we might ask question after question. The last thing I want to suggest is that you should be partisan controversialists, but it is time, and more than time, that we reminded those who try to sneer away the faith of the young, owing to difficulties, that the difficulties which lie with them are ten times greater even than the difficulties which any honest man admits remain with us.

JESUS CHRIST Himself prepared us to expect to

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find things we should not be able fully to explain when He said, "I have many things to say, but ye cannot bear them now." St. Paul was the first to say, "We know in part." It is the admission that there are unsolved mysteries in human suffering, in the existence of evil, in the power of sin, and in every conceivable theory of the Atonement, apart from the fact of it, which wakes the latent faith living in honest doubt, and again shows "the power of recovery" in a faith which once seemed dead. I have seen the keenest secularist in East London become the Church's most devoted worker; and I have a letter from an educated layman in the West who is deeply touched, after thirty-five years of unbelief in Christianity, by a sermon on "CHRIST the Light of the World."

So, again, the Church is stronger in the affections even of the people who at this moment most abuse us than even they themselves imagine. In London the fact that the loss of even twenty-five per cent. of our schools will necessitate the raising by the nation of half a million a year gives another side to the so-called "cost of clericalism." It is "the cost of clericalism" because it is part of the cost which "so-called clericalism" has borne uncomplainingly for ninety years, saving to that extent the pockets of our fellow-countrymen. No body of men in the long-run can be anything but respected, at any rate for their sincerity, which, like the Church of England, has spent ten

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thousand pounds a week for ninety years on the education of the poor, and you do not suppose that the justice - loving Englishman will not presently see this. Truth always wins at last in England, and, whatever be the immediate result with regard to this or that particular school, we must remember that the life is more than meat and the body than raiment, and that the Church, if checked in one way, will show her usual power of recovery in another, and find out new ways, into which I cannot enter now, of carrying out its primary injunction : "Feed My lambs."

And so we shall find with regard to the divisions of the Church. I expect that you hear much through certain sources in the North about disloyal churches, mostly in the South, and it is in the interest of some people carefully to propagate the idea that the Church of England is about either to go over to Rome or to fall into two hostile camps ; but, unless I greatly mistake the signs of the times, the Church of England is about to do neither of these things. The Church of England is about to show a power of recovery which will astonish the world and confound her enemies. It is true that for want of direction some churches years ago instituted devotions and services which cannot stand the test of loyalty to the standard of worship laid down in the Church of England, but, with very few exceptions, even those churches are not consciously disloyal. Much

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has been already given up, and every extra service submitted for the sanction of the Bishop. On the other hand, in other cases at present, among those who by defect, as well as excess, mutilate the Liturgy, many have seen the error of their ways; daily services, increased reverence in worship, observance of Saints' days, are more general, and there seems a growing desire in both the two chief parties of the Church to unite upon their common Prayer-Book, and to find their centre of unity in their Bishops, whom they admit—at least, in theory—to be the rulers of them both.

But it is time to turn from the Church at large to your Church life in Yorkshire. What is the Easter message to you in this diocese? First, that you must all resolve to make this cathedral more than ever the heart of the diocese. It is now one of the noblest churches in England; but the noblest church in England, the noblest church in the world, is nothing to a diocese unless throughout the whole diocese it is looked upon and felt to be the pulsing heart from which missionary zeal and energy flow freely to the whole body, and back to which everyone turns in gratitude and love. I have not forgotten Lichfield Cathedral crowded with miners at the annual festival of the Lichfield Diocesan Home Mission, when those converted through the missions paid their own fares to Lichfield to come and worship in the great cathedral itself, because

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the Gospel mission sent from that cathedral had brought them back from darkness to light. I can imagine this great cathedral crowded at such a service, and the roof almost lifted off by the uniting of voices of thousands of men such as those who in old days used to sing, with tears in their eyes, to the tune of "Home, sweet home":

"Redeemed, restored, forgiven,
Through Jesu's precious Blood,
Heirs of His home in Heaven,
O praise our pardoning God.

"Praise Him in tuneful measures,
Who gave His Son to die!
Praise Him whose sevenfold treasures
Enrich and sanctify!"

Then, with a cathedral starting on its work with new hope and zeal and energy, every worker of the diocese, and every priest, and every deacon, should lift up his head when he hears the Easter promise, "He that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Believe me, dear brothers, you have not fathomed yet the depth of sympathy which lies hidden in you for the comfort of the world. You have not drawn fully on the power you can derive from the risen CHRIST. You who are Sunday-school teachers, feeling cold, and dead, and lifeless in your work, can start to-day a living force among your children, and teach them with new power, and fresh faith, and revived love.

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If the power of recovery enters the Church at large and the cathedral, so, also, there is life only waiting to be evoked in the life and heart of every true worker in the cause of CHRIST. Was CHRIST dead in the tomb? Was He brought on Easter Day to a glorious life? Then He can revive you. "He that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live"; and thousands shall be grateful for the power of recovery disclosed in you by faith in the risen CHRIST.

And, lastly, as to you, dear brothers and sisters, who have been looking forward to this great day for so long, who have toiled for it, given for it, prayed for it, let it not pass without a real effort on your part to enter into its power. Have you become slack lately in your religious life? Has your faith grown weaker? Have you become a victim to some secret habit of which no one knows? Are you, like so many I have got to know in the West London Mission, living double lives, yet without courage to face and break the chain? Then, it is not for the Church only, not for the cathedral, not for the workers, but for you in your individual life to test the power of recovery which lies hidden in every Christian soul. But for God's sake do not delay. Do not pass by the chance. Time after time have I felt that if that particular chance to that particular soul had not been grasped, the soul would have become so

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hardened and so hopeless that the next chance would have been too late. *Now* is the time. *Now* is the chance. JESUS of Nazareth passeth by, if He ever passes by, as we know He does, at a time like this.

“ Oh, come to the merciful Saviour who calls you,
Oh, come to the LORD who forgives and forgets;
Though dark be the fortune on earth that befalls you,
There's a bright home above, where the sun never sets.”

The witness of the Church, and the testimony of thousands of souls now redeemed in Paradise, but once dead in trespasses and sins, confirm the promise that the power of recovery as claimed before men and angels by JESUS CHRIST on Easter Day is passed on to every believing soul that humbly starts that new life in Him again. Grip, grip with your Northern grip this Easter message of hope, and live it out in your lives; recover yourselves, recover lost ground in the diocese, recover the pit villages, recover the country parishes, recover the lapsed masses, and never falter until there is only one spiritual King in the North of England, one LORD of lords and King of kings, and that King JESUS CHRIST, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

XXII

THE GOLDEN KEY OF PRAYER*

“Ask, and ye shall have ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.”—ST. MATT. vii. 7.

THERE can be only one subject for the first Rogation Day, or the day which we call Rogation Sunday, and that subject must be the subject of prayer ; and I am only repeating the things that were said to me privately over and over again in a recent mission when I say that “Why should we pray? how should we pray? and what should we pray for?” are questions which are always being asked in the inner depths of hearts over and over again in this great London of ours. I propose to answer these questions one by one.

Why should we pray? And, as we ask ourselves the question, I suppose that the first answer

* Preached in Westminster Abbey on Rogation Sunday, 1905, the day set apart in the Diocese of London for special prayer and almsgiving for the work of the Bishop of London's Fund.

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must be, "Because of a deep inherited instinct which has been trained and fostered from our childhood by those we love." Notice, we must have the whole answer. Whether a child would pray if it was never taught may fairly be questioned; but certainly there would always be in it that deep instinct for prayer—a deep instinct which still remains, too, in the minds and hearts of men who have ceased to believe in a God, for a man once told me most pathetically that, though all his faith had gone, every morning regularly he practised what he called self-reflection to satisfy that instinct of prayer which he could satisfy in no other way.

And, before we leave that instinct of prayer which not only raised our beautiful houses of prayer, but which is the cause of the erection of those altars, now broken down, which, travellers tell us, are found sometimes on almost desolate shores, let us learn from it the comfort and the strength which it ought to give us. If the instinct of hunger testifies to the existence of bread, if the fin of the fish bears witness to the existence of water, if the wing of the bird bears witness to the existence, somewhere, of air, let us in our doubting moments clutch hold and make the most of this certainty—that the instinct of prayer demands God, and is a standing witness to the existence of a God who alone can satisfy it.

And, therefore, let us recognise this fact, in the

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first place, that we are never so natural as when we pray. Over and over again you find that people in the workshops and in the great houses of business in London will almost flout the man or woman who goes regularly to church or who says his or her prayers. They point out, as they imagine, that it is an unnatural thing to do—an unnatural thing on a beautiful Sunday afternoon to spend an hour in a house of prayer. What we must recognise, in the first place, is this: that we are most natural when we pray, for if there is one thing certain about human nature, it is that man is a praying animal, and is born to pray.

And yet, when I think over the many visits to the dying which, as a minister of CHRIST, I have had to pay, or as I picture myself on my death-bed, with all things earthly slipping from me, I am thankful that I have something more than an instinct on which to rest. If one only has an instinct of immortality, what are you to do when some dying boy looks you in the face, and says, "Tell me, sir, a little more about whither I am going"? And one thanks CHRIST over and over again that He reinforced the instinct of immortality by saying, "In My FATHER's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you." "To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise." And, just as the instinct of immortality is reinforced by authority, so a voice, which, we trust, speaks from Heaven, says to the instinct of prayer: "Ask, and

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ye shall have ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

And to reinforce the instinct of prayer we have the voice of authority—the voice of One who came from Heaven, and therefore must know what opens Heaven's gates. And, if I may take an illustration that will appeal to even the youngest, I do not know that we can picture the authority on which we rest our prayers better than by recalling the touching scene in Sheffield when our late aged Queen, in her last years, had to open the gates of the Town Hall of Sheffield. It was thought well that she should not move from her carriage, so hidden electric wires were fastened to a golden key fitting into the lock, which she could turn as she sat in her carriage. By an act of faith—for it amounted to that—she turned the golden key, and as she turned the golden key, at some distance away, slowly, surely, the gates of the Town Hall opened. Now, is not that a true illustration, which you who so often are puzzled how you are to teach your children, can use with regard to prayer? It is true in every particular. We cannot see the wires which connect the golden key of prayer with Heaven's gate ; but a voice which we trust says to us, "Turn the key—turn the golden key." "Ask, and ye shall have ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" ; and, when we pray, we are obeying the

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voice of authority which reinforces the instinct of prayer.

And yet, if we stopped here, we should ignore the most touching thing in Christendom, and that is the witness which millions of souls who have turned the key bear to the fact that through those open doors there have come to them in their sorrows and in their joys angels to minister to them ; that they did ask, and they did receive ; that they did seek, and they did find ; that they did knock, and it was opened. It was by no happy accident that Havelock's prayer-meetings produced the men for the forlorn hope. It was not a happy accident that Gordon's handkerchief outside his tent, which signified that he was at his prayers, helped to make him the hero that he was. It was not a happy accident that those who have turned this world upside down for good have been those who most firmly believed in another world. And therefore, on a day like this, and in a glorious Abbey like this, which reminds us of the prayers of thousands—nay, millions—who have worshipped here, when we ask the question, "Why should we pray?" the answer is, "Because we know that our fellowship is with the FATHER and with His SON JESUS CHRIST."

And if, then, we who pray have no cause on grounds of reason or of history or of human nature to be ashamed of our prayer, we turn to the next

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question, "How shall we pray?" If this is what prayer is, then prayer is one of the great forces of the world, and all the forces of the world have their laws for effective action. What are the laws of the effective action of prayer?

And first, undoubtedly, we must name the law or condition of faith. After all, that is common-sense. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." And if in any kind of way, by misunderstanding of the Bible or of the teaching of the Church, you have got any conception of the Being to whom you go in your prayers which is other than that of One perfectly just, perfectly good, and perfectly loving, then, I say, put those ideas aside. You cannot pray, you cannot enjoy your prayer, unless you believe that, when you pray, you are coming to a Being who is absolutely perfect, absolutely good, absolutely just, and absolutely loving. And therefore, if there are passages of the Bible which you do not understand, put them out of your mind. It is better to put those passages out of your mind than let anything dim your conception of the Being to whom you come in prayer. You must believe that He is perfectly good; and therefore, if there are any of you who feel that their prayers are very unreal and very cold, do look to your faith. We cannot argue now the question as to whether God is good or just; but look to your faith. It is faith in

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such a GOD as that which is the first secret of effective prayer.

And then, take unselfishness. What does the LORD'S PRAYER begin with? "OUR FATHER"—not "MY FATHER." "Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come." True prayer is unselfish. And it is here that comes in so naturally the great work which on Rogation Sunday, throughout London, we join with our prayers. It is impossible for anyone to pray who does not care whether other people have the opportunity for worshipping which they have themselves; and when there are forty-three churches being built, as there are at this moment in London, the man whose prayers cannot be heard in this or in any other church is the man who does not care that there are thousands in London who have no house of prayer at all. His indifference chokes his prayer. Selfishness chokes prayer. The prayer of a selfish man never reaches GOD at all. Twenty-eight thousand pounds is all that is at present given yearly in London to build these forty-three churches; but such a sum can build by itself only three or four churches. If that was raised to the one hundred thousand a year or the two hundred thousand a year, which it ought to be, then not only would the people round those forty-three half-built or unbuilt churches have an opportunity for prayer, but the rich people would become more unselfish by giving, and so would

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find their own prayers more effective when they pray. Unselfishness is the hall-mark on effective prayer. The unselfish spirit refuses to be saved by itself, but it says, "Our FATHER, only look on me with the others. *Our* FATHER, which art in Heaven." And therefore, if you would have your prayers acceptable to GOD, think not only of yourselves, but of others!

And then, the third law of effective prayer is the law of loyalty. Why does JESUS CHRIST trust His name to us to use in prayer? Why are we allowed to say "for JESUS CHRIST's sake"? I answer that question by another: "Why does a husband give his wife his name to use?" On one condition, and that condition is that his interests are her interests, that his honour is her honour, and that her life is identified with his. Have you ever thought that that is the understood condition on which JESUS CHRIST allows His name to be used by us? And may not the secret of many an ineffective prayer be that, when we plead the name, we are not fully loyal to the Person whose name we plead? An effective prayer in the name of JESUS CHRIST means to make, ten times more thoroughly than it is to-day, His interest our interest, His honour our honour, His life our life.

And then, fourthly, effective prayer must be persevering. How hard it is to go on praying time after time for something which never comes!

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But we are warned that the answer to prayer may not come at once. Why are those stories told us of the unjust judge and the selfish friend? Not—GOD forbid!—that GOD is like either, but to show us that if an unjust judge or a selfish friend hears at last, then the GOD of love is certain to hear, and that if we persevere how much more will our Heavenly FATHER give the answer to those that ask Him.

We have but a few moments left to face the third question: What shall we pray for? And, after the unselfish prayer which the LORD'S Prayer teaches us to offer first, then we find that we are allowed to ask for the daily bread for body and soul, for the daily pardon, for the daily guardianship from the Evil One for ourselves and for those we love.

And if people say, "Why ask for these gifts of GOD? He will give them, surely, without asking?" our answer is, "Does He do it in Nature?" The gold is the gift of GOD, but we dig for it; the coal is the gift of GOD, but we mine for it; the bread is the gift of GOD, but we sow for it and we reap for it. So with these other gifts of GOD—power, wisdom, strength, love. They are the gifts of GOD, but we have to pray for them, and therefore prayer comes to be the most beautiful work in the world, the most glorious work, to be done with a method, to be done with perseverance and at regular times, and yet to pervade the whole

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life, so that in a true sense we “pray without ceasing.” “Ye, then, who are the LORD’s remembrancers”—that is what it comes to—“ye who are the LORD’s remembrancers, take ye no rest and give Him no rest until He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.” And, while you act as His remembrancers, and remind Him of His promises and plead them, do your own part in giving. Be not hypocrites who say, “Thy kingdom come,” and never take one step to make it come. But if you work as you pray, not only will you receive blessing and strength and peace in your own hearts, but you will hasten the coming of His kingdom.

XXIII

THE WORK OF A PARISH PRIEST*

“When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. . . . And He gave some, apostles ; and some, prophets ; and some, evangelists ; and some, pastors and teachers ; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of CHRIST.”—EPH. iv. 8–12.

“WHEN He ascended up on high He *gave*.” That is one of the most touching things about Ascension Day. Of course, we think of many things on such a day as this. We think of our LORD having finished all His sufferings, having completed at last His work—completed it, not on Good Friday, but on Ascension Day, when He went behind the veil, and, as it were, offered the blood there. But the most touching thing about Ascension Day is His love for us whom He left behind ; as the hymn says :

“ Our fellow-sufferer yet retains
A fellow-feeling for our pains,
And still remembers in the skies
His tears, His agonies, and cries.”

* Preached at the institution of the Rev. G. F. Holden as Vicar of All Saints', Margaret Street, on Ascension Day, 1905.

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No sooner has He gone back into glory than He *gives*.

He gave the Comforter to the Christian Church. The body was prepared. He had taken the disciples up into lonely mountains to have the body carefully prepared. On this rock He would build the Church, and the gates of hell should not prevail against it. The body was prepared, but it was not yet filled with life. When He sent down the HOLY SPIRIT upon that prepared body He gave the Church to the world. He gave the great gift of the Christian Church.

And in the Christian Church He gave some, apostles; some, prophets; some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.

We have assembled here to see another gift of the ascended CHRIST. And what a day for an institution is Ascension Day! He gave in the old days some, prophets; some, evangelists; some, pastors and teachers; but in our day the parish priest has to be all four things to the Church and the world. These four words describe very accurately what a parish priest has to try, with God's help, to be to His people to-day.

First, a prophet. He has to stand in a place like this, looking into the problems which are puzzling and distressing his people, having the eyes of a prophet to see into the Word of God, and then flash the message out of the Word of God to meet the necessities of his people. A

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prophet, a forth-teller—that is what the word means.

He has, secondly, to be an evangelist. A true-hearted parish priest is never content with a little body of people that happens to be round his church at any particular moment. His soul longs for the thousands outside his church, and he is always thinking what new means he can find to preach the Gospel to them. He is an evangelist, a missionary-hearted man.

He is, thirdly, a pastor. “*Pasce Verbo, pasce vita*” (Feed with the Word, feed with the life). He is to feed with both. He is to feed his people with the Word which he preaches, and feed them with the Word of Life at the altar. He is to feed them by the example of a self-denying, earnest, devoted life, which preaches far more effectually than his sermons. He is, then, to be a pastor of souls who looks after and knows the people, and knows that they will only be saved one by one, and helped one by one, and who grudges no trouble or care for one single individual soul. That is a pastor. A man who does that has a pastoral heart.

Fourthly, he has to be a teacher. His sermons are not to be mere appeals to the emotions; but he has to teach line upon line, here a little, there a little, the whole Catholic faith committed to his trust.

Now, my people of All Saints', you have had a

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man* among you who, to a large extent, did that fourfold work. He was in a true measure all those four things—prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher. I shall never forget the moment of my life when I wrung the hand of that brave man after celebrating for him in his sick-room after the last operation, as, with tears in his eyes and a brave look in his face, he pressed my hand in a last grasp. It was the last I saw of him on earth. I do rejoice that you of this church—I should like to say this to-day—have shown by your most generous and touching memorial gift what you thought of his ministry among you. I had to-day a letter from her whom he loved so well, and who stood by his side here, and I think you would like to know how much your touching gift has comforted her.

Well, it fell upon me in the providence of God to find a successor to that man. I need not say that I prayed to be guided aright; and I believe to the bottom of my soul that the man† to whom I was guided will prove himself to be the best man I could have found in London to be to you a prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher.

There are some here present, I have no doubt, from St. John's.‡ And it must be with very

* Prebendary Allen Whitworth.

† The Rev. G. F. Holden.

‡ St. John's, Wilton Road, where Mr. Holden had ministered for twenty years.

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mingled feelings that they are here to-day; and they would tell you, if you of All Saints' asked them, with tears in their voices, what a prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher he has been to them.

We are here to-day then to send him forth with full authority, as we have done; we are assembled here to pray for him, and for a blessing upon his work; and you of All Saints' are assembled here to receive him as a gift from JESUS CHRIST. That is what it means if these things which I have been saying to you are true, if I have interpreted rightly this passage of Scripture. It is nothing less than this, that you are assembled here on Ascension Day to receive from the ascended CHRIST a gift which He has given you.

It is to you, the people of All Saints', to whom I speak my last words this afternoon. If these things are true, then what a responsibility lies on you for the way in which you receive this gift of the ascended CHRIST! Surely you must give your new vicar that loyal-hearted welcome which you are bound to give to one who comes to you in the name of the LORD. You will give him from the start, if you are wise, that spiritual confidence which is the best help to a parish priest in his work. Let him feel that he comes among a band of friends.

And, lastly, help him in the work which he comes to do here, described in the verse which I have read to you—"for the perfecting of the saints, for the

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work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of CHRIST, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the SON of GOD, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of CHRIST."

Go forth, then, dear brother, to the work which lies before you; and what happier and more beautiful work can there be in this world than the glorious work of helping souls? And may you and your people never tire in your work together, so that every soul that comes under the power and ministry of this church may grow more and more "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of CHRIST."

XXIV

LIVING WATER*

JESUS answered and said unto her, Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life."—ST. JOHN iv. 13, 14.

ONE of the permanent wonders of the world is the method adopted by GOD for spreading throughout the world the water of life; even in Old Testament days a man was constantly used as a messenger of the LORD of Hosts. "The word of the LORD came to me." Prophet after prophet gives us the secret of his mission; and even in those days we might wonder why a frail, sinful man should be chosen as the bearer of some high imperial message from GOD. But in the New Testament the wonder deepens; it is not any longer that the SPIRIT of GOD uses this man or that: He dwells in him. "The HOLY SPIRIT is with you, and shall be *in* you," is the promise.

* Preached at the Triennial Festival of Wells Theological College, in Wells Cathedral, May, 1905.

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"The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life."

"Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water"—and this, we are told, He spake of the SPIRIT, which they who believed in Him should receive. A man, then, is not only to be used from time to time for a special purpose, but there is to be in him a well of water, from which others shall drink ; he is to carry with him, wherever he goes, the water of life ; unless he does so, humanly speaking, no other source of supply is open to the thirsty world. The grace of GOD may be ready to descend, there may be "the sound of abundance of rain," but in nine cases out of ten it is a believing, spiritual man, who has drunk himself of the water of life, who gives others to drink, and it is from them in their turn, as they, too, become fountains of this water, that the thirst of the world will be finally assuaged.

Now, when once we have grasped this plan of GOD, the training and the inspiration and the history of the Church become intelligible ; it becomes intelligible why JESUS CHRIST spent such infinite pains upon the vessels which were to contain the living water. As has often been pointed out, when people say that the Church is not in the Bible, they ignore the careful choosing and training and teaching of the first disciples ; if so much was to depend on them, we do not wonder at the hours which JESUS CHRIST spent in

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prayer before He chose them ; we understand why He turned from the crowd, and spent hours alone with the disciples ; we understand the care with which He became to them "Pastor Pastorum." If everything depended on their holding and transmitting the living water which was to save the world, then no trouble was too great to stop that leak in the character of this one or of that one ; no pains were wasted to correct the egotism of St. Peter, to strengthen the timid faith of St. Thomas, to train them all to believe in His immediate Presence, even when they saw Him no more with their bodily eyes. If they failed, everything failed ; if they lost their faith, lowered their ideals, gave up drinking of the living water, then there would be no well springing up unto eternal life ; people would come to be inspired, but would find no inspiration ; they would come for refreshment, but go thirsty away ; it was only if these men were sound and true and faithful, and went on believing more and more and drinking of the SPIRIT more and more, that more and more the stream of living water would permeate the world. Mere inanimate channels might convey other things, but not the water of life ; and, therefore, on the faith and the courage and the perseverance of these men depended, according to the lines on which God pleased to work, the spiritual inspiration of the world.

And if from this point of view we comprehend

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more clearly the necessity for the long training, so we understand—so far as mortal mind can understand—something of the wonders of Pentecost. At one time “the HOLY SPIRIT,” we are told, “was not yet given, because JESUS was not yet glorified”; but when He was glorified, then into the prepared vessels descended in full measure the water of life. The fulfilment of the promise contained in our text came to pass: JESUS was giving the water of life to those who believed.

And then was seen the result and the justification of the long training: each prepared soul received the gracious gift; the timid became brave, the weak strong, and the puzzled and perplexed became decided and bold; but—and here was the wonder—not their own souls alone did the water of life refresh, but, without one left out, each according to his talents and his powers, went forth to bear the water of life springing up like a well of water within him, to quench the thirst of a dying world.

Do you suppose it was no surprise to St. Philip to find the Eunuch looking to him for help? Do you suppose that St. Peter felt no surprise at finding his great denial was forgiven, and that he could say to the lame man, “Silver and gold have I none, but what I have give I thee; rise and walk”? Do you suppose St. Thomas felt no surprise on finding himself forgiven for having said, “Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, I will not believe,” and that he,

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too, was allowed to be a bearer of the water of life? On the contrary, it must have seemed to them wonderful, a miracle of grace, a marvel of the working of GOD that the water which they had been given had become in them a well of water springing up unto everlasting life.

Now, you will readily understand why I am laying stress upon the method which GOD has chosen to employ to do His work in the world. Of course, His grace overflows its channels time after time ; He is not bound by His own Sacraments or His own ordained ministry, but, still, the fact remains that what He did of old He does to-day. You, too, have been called, trained, filled, used. "Do you think that you are truly called to the ministry of the Church?" is the question you have all been asked. "I think so," you have all said. But who called you? The answer you gave can have no real meaning unless JESUS called you. He did call you, as really as He called Simon and Andrew ; He called you as a child to baptism, as a youth to confirmation, as a man to ordination ; you were regenerated by water and the HOLY GHOST in your baptism ; then came the falling of the HOLY GHOST upon you first in confirmation : "Then laid they their hands on you, and you received the HOLY GHOST, for as yet He was fallen upon none of you." The living water was given you in your confirmation, and in your measure you have been priests to GOD ever since. We must

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never underrate even in our minds the true priesthood of the laity. At every confirmation I feel I send out into the world a most real body of priests, men and women, boys and girls, who have to carry wells of water to a thirsty world, and bravely do they often discharge their glorious task; the work of some of the confirmed in a district like East London will be read out some day from the book of God before saints and angels as one of the glories of the Church.

But you have been more than confirmed, you have been ordained, you have been set apart, as the late Canon Moberly so well describes in his book, "Ministerial Priesthood," as organs of the priestly body, and therefore in special measure the water of life that has been given you is to be in you a well of water springing up to eternal life.

Did it not surprise you in your first curacy—and yet was anything more mysteriously delightful and awe-inspiring?—to find someone coming to you to drink of the water of life? Is it not the secret of the wonderful charm of that first curacy that it was then that you tasted this great joy of life? You remember it so well even to-day; it was the sermon in which you spoke your heart out in that mission church, which you found had at last touched the heart of a man who had been hardened for years; it was in that little cottage the poor mother believed, from what you said, at last that she would see her boy again; it was your going

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out that dark and stormy night which just stopped that girl going to the bad ; you hardly dared to believe it, but had you really been at last yourself in some measure like the good shepherd who had gone after the lost sheep until he found it ?

And now the years have gone on, and it is middle life with some of you, and going towards the end with a few. Our life as priests seems to the world still a surprising thing : we are most of us poor ; our life seems to the world sadly monotonous ; we have the same things to do day after day. But, as we look back, every hour of toil, every day of labour, and even every disappointment, is made up for by this assurance : we have been used sometimes, at any rate ; those people do believe a little more because we went to that parish. Another man may have done it better, but, still, that mission of ours, we feel, was owned of GOD ; and everything becomes worth while, and toil is nothing, and work is nothing, if only it is true that there are some living in this world to-day who put their lips down to the faith and love and hope welling up in us, and through us they touch JESUS ; He gave them to drink through us of the water of life, and they are singing to-day—not, thank GOD, anything about us, but because of what we taught them they are singing :

“ I came to JESUS, and I drank
Of that life-giving stream,
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
And now I live in Him.”

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It is, then, with a most deep sense of gratitude that we meet on a day like this—a sense of gratitude in you towards the place where you learned so much, of gratitude towards the men who taught you here ; but—behind place and men—a sense of gratitude in us all to CHRIST Himself, who used even us to convey to others the water of life.

But, after all, we none of us can afford to dwell too long on any help we have been allowed to give others, even though the thought of it is turned at once into gratitude to CHRIST. We are too conscious—are we not?—of how many times we have failed, and our most earnest desire is to start afresh from this Festival with new power, fresh grace, and an effectiveness we have never known before.

And if this is to be so, we must realise at once that three things are essential if we are to transmit to others the water of life. There must be, in the first place, no permanent leak in the vessel which is to bear the living water. I need hardly say that in that terribly anxious and responsible post I hold. I have an often saddening experience—not by any means solely or even chiefly in my own diocese—of the faults of character which have ruined many a promising career. Sometimes it is an indulged vanity which has grown on a man until he has become a laughing-stock to his parishioners and a scandal to his friends. Sometimes it is a softness of character, which, allowed in innocent things,

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has at last given way when some sudden temptation fell upon him ; sometimes it is an arrogance and overbearing manner, which has mastered a man when he is left too much and too long the ruler of a tiny circle in a country parish, and which has ruined his influence at last. Of course, I am leaving out the coarser temptations of lust and drink, although that great city from which I come is strewn with the wrecks of men—some brilliant men—from every part of the world, who started so blithely on their ordination day for a life of service, and who, through drink or lust, have been driven on the rocks. But, not to speak of coarser temptations, how often has a good man's work been undermined by secret conceit, by love of popularity, by playing to the gallery, by a love of seeing his name in print, by jealousy of a fellow-worker, or a sloth which has grown with his growth and increased with his years !

And I only mention these things to implore you to look to it and see that the cisterns within you are not cisterns which hold no water, and hold no water for the very obvious reason—at least, obvious to all but ourselves—that they have a hole at the bottom. Until we face such facts nothing can be done, and there is no good making new rules of devotion or new plans of parish work until we have faced in some quiet time the facts about our characters, known certainly to GOD, and not improbably to our

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neighbours, and have done our very best, with God's help, to remedy the mischief before it is too late.

And then, having made the vessel as sound as may be, the next thing to realise is that we can only receive the water of life day by day. It is a most delusive idea that we can be reservoirs of grace, fountains of help, without further trouble ; as Bishop Phillips Brooks points out in one of his sermons, we are never promised to be reservoirs, but only channels, and, as we have seen already, not even channels in the sense of mechanical channels, but only channels at all as we individually appropriate and assimilate the grace which we are hereafter to use.

Have you never found out by personal experience that the most beautiful phrase in the world, if merely repeated as a beautiful phrase, has been powerless to move souls, and that it is only something which has passed through the medium of your own being, and which has been true to you, which has impressed other people ?

This water of life, then, although received both at baptism, confirmation, and ordination, and in answer to our prayers, must be revived and received day by day. St. Paul himself says : " Stir up the gift that is in thee by the laying on of hands " ; and therefore immense stress for our usefulness to others is thrown upon our personal life day by day.

Do we ask, then, day by day for grace and

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strength for the day in the way people do when they realise that but for that they can do—not merely a little less well, but *nothing*? Do you ask direct for the message you are to give in each sermon? Do you pray for guidance as to how to shape it and direct it, and at least once and deeply before you deliver it?

Do you pray over the people whom you visit? over the difficult case of doubt and scepticism, over the worldly man who scorns your message, over the refractory boy who spoils your Bible-class, over even the social engagement which you must attend, that you may play your part there worthily of a priest of God?

There is no one thing which seems to bring down more power upon work than asking and receiving and passing on day by day. And perhaps we are kept thus dependent on purpose to preserve this personal element in our religion, and to keep ringing in our ears the promise of Jesus: "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink, and the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life."

But, in addition to more careful self-examination and more regular prayer, what means can we take to go back to our work with the greater power for which we long? It is probably the heartfelt longing of you all to go back with a blessing for your people as well as for yourselves; and I believe that, assuming the vessel is sound, and the daily

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supply asked for, the next secret of success is a greater venture of faith : we want to commit ourselves more wholly to the stream of God's grace, to be carried exactly whither it will take us.

"Remember," said the Bishop of Lincoln, when lecturing to us undergraduates, as Canon King, in 1880, "you will be ordained for the world"; and there ought to be among us in greater measure than there is the spirit which prompts us to go anywhere and do anything.

But, even if we remain at home, "why do the clergy never feel called," asked a working man at one of our afternoon discourses in East London, "to worse livings than they have already?" and it was a hard question to answer. We get so circumscribed in our spiritual ambitions, and are in danger of becoming "a body of gentlemen interested in Church work," instead of a band of apostles and disciples aflame for the conversion of souls.

"Oh, for freedom!" cried Faber, "for freedom in worshipping God—

" "For the mountain-top feeling of generous souls,
Where grace not in rills but in cataracts rolls!"

We might give so much more life if we were more living, and we should receive so much more of the water of life if we brought larger vessels for it, and attempted with more spiritual ambition the tasks which lie upon us in a larger way.

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Never mind if we never live to see the end of our great task :

“That low man seeks a little thing to do—
Sees it and does it.

This high man, with a great thing to pursue,
Dies ere he knows it.”

You may have the smallest parish in England, but you must attempt great things for it, and expect great things from it. “A little one may become a thousand,” and from that little parish of yours—as has been true of many a country village in the past—there may flow through the whole countryside rivers of living water ; only you must believe in the great things which can be done, and according to your faith it shall be unto you.

And so I leave with you this simple message. “Tarry ye in Jerusalem till ye be clothed with power from on high.” “Prove Me now herewith, saith the LORD of Hosts : if I will not open the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing, there shall not be room enough to receive it.” “If any man thirst, let him come to Me and drink.” With such glorious promises ringing in our ears let us bow our heads like Elijah, waiting for the promise of the FATHER, and though for the time the heavens may seem as brass, and the answer seem to come, “There is nothing, there is nothing!” at last there will be borne upon the breeze to our thirsty souls the sound of abundance of rain.

XXV

PRAISE—THE HIGHEST ACT OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP*

"The dead praise not Thee, O LORD : neither all they that go down into silence. But we will praise the LORD : from this time forth for evermore. Praise the LORD."—Ps. cxv. 17, 18.

THERE are three reasons at least which make praise the highest act of Christian worship, and the first is because it is the most unselfish. You will not expect me, in this ancient house of prayer, sanctified by the thousands of prayers which have been sent up to GOD in it—you will not expect me to depreciate prayer. Why, where should we be without praying? The man or woman who does not pray has yet to learn to live. To pray is to breathe; the breath of prayer is the breath of the soul. And yet there is a touch of selfishness about prayer. We are asking for something which we want, or which those whom we love want. You will not expect me, in a place

* Preached at the Dedication of the New Cloisters of St. Bartholomew, Smithfield, December, 1905.

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where the Holy Eucharist has been celebrated for centuries, to depreciate thanksgiving. There is not enough thanksgiving in the Church. Time after time we pray to God in our distress ; we are healed, we are helped, and we forget to give thanks. But still, even about thanksgiving there is a touch of selfishness. But, when you come to praise, praise forgets self altogether. When we praise, if we praise properly, we are simply and entirely thinking of God. "O God, how wonderful Thou art ! Thy majesty how bright !" "Praise God in His holiness: praise Him in the firmament of His power. Praise Him in His noble acts : praise Him according to His excellent greatness !" And, as I contrast the religion of to-day with the religion of centuries ago, I feel that, although we have altered for the better in some things, we have altered for the worse in others ; and one of the things in which we have distinctly gone back from the religion of the Psalms is praise. These Psalms are full of praise from one end to the other. When we ask what the old monks did who used to go up and down these cloisters which we have opened, and worship in this very church, we have many criticisms to offer upon monasteries of which I have no time to speak now ; but there was one thing they did—they praised God continually. They did not think it waste of time to praise God, and therefore I certainly long in London to have more praise. Every

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business man who goes up to work in the City ought to praise God before he goes, and in the middle of the day he may come, if he can, to one of the City churches for a little quiet time to praise God again, that so he may do all his work, and spend all his life, to the glory of God. We find that title "To the greater glory of God" put up on our public buildings; the whole of the city used to ring with praise in the centuries that are gone. We must bring back that glorious note of praise, and think over again the greatness of God, the generosity of God, the patience of God, the love of God, and really try to praise Him better than we do.

Just think how great He is. Go out some starry night and look up into the heavens, and ask who it is that planned, and still holds in the hollow of His hands, that wonderful pageant which we see. Must not we say—are we not driven to say, What a wonderful mind God has! How great God is! Then again, how generous He is! Why are we alive to-day? Why are we breathing, sentient beings at all? Only because of the generosity of God. God, complete in Himself, desired to spread happiness, and have so many more millions of people living in the sunshine of His own happiness, and therefore He said, "Let there be light, let there be life." And because He said that, and only because He said that, you and I are alive to-day—because of the generosity of God. Think

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of His patience. I have seen men get up time after time and blaspheme GOD, and say that there is no GOD, and yet GOD does not say anything. He gives them the breath with which they blaspheme. He is feeding them every day. He sees men as He looks down from heaven doing deeds of dastardly cowardice and deeds of darkness, but He stays His hand, "not willing"—and remember, during Advent this wonderful phrase—"not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." How patient He is! How loving He is! Do you believe in the Cross, or do you not? If you believe in the Cross, then it is the greatest revelation of love that could be made by GOD.

And if we believe that GOD is great and generous and patient and loving, we shall not want to be stirred up to praise Him. We shall praise Him spontaneously. "O GOD, my heart is ready; I will sing and speak praise with the best member that I have." "The dead praise not Thee, O GOD, neither all they that go down into silence; but we will praise the LORD: from this time forth for evermore. Praise the LORD."

And then, secondly, praise is the highest act of Christian worship, because it demands everything we have got and everything that we are. We stand up to praise because the whole man is wanted to praise—the *whole* man. What is wanted is first the reverent attitude of the body, and the whole

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bodily life offered in praise. And that is why the invalids in the great hospital adjoining this church can join so beautifully in the praise that circles round God. There is no more lovely note of praise than that which rises from the sick-beds of the world, where the body, in all its pain and suffering, is offered in praise. The most that any of us can do is to praise—our work is but an incident in praise—and those sufferers are praising in their sufferings. As we look round a church like this, and see every corner and every bit of it so beautifully cared for, and with how loving a carefulness the old architects and builders went about their work, we cannot help feeling that they did it in a spirit of praise. They spared no trouble, they spared no expense. See what they lavished on their churches and cathedrals centuries ago. All work done by the body, all art, can be offered in praise. Then, again, praise demands the mind. We want not less reading, but more reading. There are some foolish people who are under the idea that something will be discovered some day which will upset our religion. Do you suppose that truth can contradict itself? The more we find out, the more we know, and the more we know, the better we can praise. We want to worship God, and to praise Him with the mind. All the discoveries of the world can do nothing against the truth, but must do everything for the truth. And we praise Him thirdly with the conscience.

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JESUS CHRIST not only satisfies the conscience, but He educates it. As Archbishop Temple said, we could not have thought of anything so perfect as the character of CHRIST Himself. Every man in the City who says, "What would JESUS do in this complicated business if He were in my place?" and the working woman who says, as she goes about her work, "I must live as in His Presence" — they are praising with their conscience; they are following the best thing they know; they are following the most perfect ideal that has ever been put before their consciences, and they cannot do more. And so again praise demands the will. I have known many people who were miserable about their feelings in their religion; but who said religion depends upon the feelings? We walk by faith, not by feeling. "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." And every patient soul who, when feeling cold and dead, goes on with his prayers, goes on with his worship, goes on with his Communion, doing the will of GOD as far as he knows it, "he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of GOD," and he is praising GOD with his will.

And, lastly, praise is the highest act of Christian worship because it most closely unites us with those who are gone before into the other world. The very passage from the Psalm which I have taken for our text reminds us how much clearer are our ideas of the other world than were the

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ideas of the Jews of old. "The dead praise not Thee, O God!" No, the dead bodies do not, but we believe every day that our blessed dead are engaged in praising God. We know little about the life beyond the grave of those who passed centuries ago from this church and into the other world, but we believe we do know that they serve there, that they praise there, that their service is praise and their praise is service. And therefore there is no way in which we can bridge over the life here and the life there, or be getting ready to join in the great chorus of praise which goes up from the world beyond the grave, than by a life of quiet and happy praise on earth.

I plead, then, in the last place, for praise as a preparation for the life of Heaven. And if, with dedication of body, mind, conscience, and will we live a life of praise on earth, then when death comes we need not be afraid; death will be only the passing from praise here to praise there. And while we say of our tired bodies, "Behold, I lay me down in peace and take my rest," of our spirits, of our souls, we can say, "O God, my heart is ready; I will sing praise either here or there with the best member that I have."

XXVI

THINGS NEW AND OLD*

"Every scribe who hath been made a disciple to the kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old."
—ST. MATT. xiii. 52.

THINGS new and old—both have a special attraction of their own. It must indeed be a dull mind which finds no attraction in things old. An old banner torn with shot and shell—what an interest it has! "How many times," we say to ourselves as we look at it, "has it cheered on a regiment to victory, or rallied it in defeat!" An old building—how many generations has it looked upon and sheltered! If it could speak, what stories it could tell! How humble it would make us feel if it could recount all the deeds of generosity and acts of self-sacrifice it has witnessed in the past! A set of old miniatures—how they bring back the dead people until you seem to look upon their very faces and hear them speak

* Preached in Southwark Cathedral, on the final separation of the new diocese, in the presence of the King and Queen, July, 1905.

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again! Truly there is a wonderful attraction in things old.

But if there is an attraction in things old, so also is there a winning power in things new. The morning of life, the new age, the coming dawn, the approach of the unexpected, the promise of the future—who does not know the magical attraction of things new? The young knight stands, in Watts's picture of "Aspiration," with his hair blown back from his face, his eyes blazing with hope, his left hand on his sword, his right hand on his banner, and he looks out across the plain in the morning of his life; he is the symbol of the expectant glory of things new, and the interpreter of the picture has caught the spirit of the poet-painter when he wrote underneath it :

"For all may have, if they dare try,
A glorious life or grave."

But if things old are rich with traditions of the past, and things new bright with the promise of the future, what shall we say of a day and of a place which has the attraction and the power of them both? We must say that it is a great day in the annals of Church and nation; we must say that it is, and always will be, a great and glorious place.

To-day the old church of St. Mary Overy becomes the new cathedral of the Diocese of Southwark. It needs no words to point to its glories

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in the past, as anyone can read in the interesting account of it by the present Canon Chancellor, and as was pointed out by the present Archbishop, then Bishop of Winchester and formerly Bishop of Rochester, at the reopening of the church in 1897. This church is rich in the memories of the past ; it is associated with Gower, Shakespeare, William of Wykeham, Lancelot Andrewes, and one whose connection with the church has been marked lately by our friends and kinsmen in America, the founder of Harvard University. But if it comes to us laden with the traditions and memories of the past, what a glorious interest it has as the new cathedral of a new diocese, and of a diocese second to none in the scope and importance of its work ! We on the other side of the river have watched with sympathy and interest the long and splendid effort of our sister diocese to realise herself ; we have marked with admiration the self-sacrifice with which the hundredth Bishop of Rochester, elected to become the first Bishop of Southwark and gave up without a murmur, not only his old position, but a large proportion of his income ; and we have seen how his example has evoked a response, which must have more than repaid him, in the love and devotion of his people.

And now, as this old church becomes the new cathedral, the promise of its future seems even to outshine the glories of its past. What may it not

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do to unify and spiritualise and fructify the work of the new diocese? Here will beat the pulsing heart of the diocese from which all new efforts will take their start, and to which they will all return for thanksgiving and renewal. Nothing has been too old for it to touch in the past ; nothing will be too new for it to welcome in the future. It will welcome, as it did not long ago, almost the last organisation formed in England, the Royal Naval Reserve, when the London division assembled here for its first church parade ; here will be gathered the Church Lads' Brigades of the diocese for their annual service ; here will meet, as I know it has already done, the United Girls Schools' Mission, which has its special sphere in this diocese, to ask God's blessing on its efforts. This old building will be young again as the fresh young life pours through it year by year.

And notice, in being at once new and old, it is fulfilling the very function pointed out as the rôle of a true disciple by our LORD in the words of our text : " Every scribe who is made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven is to be like a householder, which brings forth out of his treasures things new and old."

There are men who imagine that Christianity has had its day, that it has lost its power, that it was all very well for old times and old ideas, that we must have a new Gospel for a new age. Why, my brethren, the full glory of Christianity is yet

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to come ; no one can alter by a hair's breadth, or has a right to touch for a moment, the faith once delivered to the saints ; but every age only reveals deeper glories in it, and draws out new strength to meet new needs.

Where, except in our Christianity, are we to find the power to keep the nation sound at its heart, to preserve the purity of family life, and send out our boys and girls equipped with true principles of character and conduct ? Where, except in the Christian teaching of brotherhood, can we hope to soften the division between rich and poor ? And where, except in the "sure and certain hope" of immortality, can we find consolation for the dying and comfort for the mourner of any age ?

And as with Christianity, so with the Church of England, it is our glory to "bring out of our treasure things new and old." We are proud of our past ; we are proud of being so inextricably knit up with the nation's life that it is quite as true to say that the Church established the nation as the nation the Church ; we are proud of the fact that by our Church Synods we gave the nation the idea of a national Parliament ; we are proud of the statement in the great Magna Charta itself that "the Church of England shall be free."

But we also glory in our youth ; we glory in flinging ourselves with the exuberance and abandonment of youth among this new population which

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pours into London ; we glory in grappling, with unabated energy and zeal, with the new problems which confront us every year ; we glory in adapting ourselves to new conditions, and finding new expression for the old truth committed to our charge ; we glory in evoking new missionary zeal in an old church ; in other words, we glory in bringing "out of our treasure things new and old."

It is, then, in accordance with the best traditions of our Church, and in obedience to the direct teaching of its Lord, that we assemble here to launch this old ship on its new voyage. There is no element of encouragement lacking at the launch. We have with us the gracious presence of our King and Queen, who have before this shown their interest in this church in earlier days ; we have our Archbishop present, who worked so hard at the foundations of the work which receives its crown to-day ; we have a much-loved Bishop at the head of the diocese ; we have an able Chapter at the cathedral ; we have here assembled the civic authorities of South London ; we have a united and enthusiastic body of Church-people ; and, above all, we have with us (can we doubt it?) that without which all else would be of no avail—the favouring wind of GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT. May that HOLY SPIRIT fill the sails to-day, and bear the good ship on its way to discharge its mission of love and mercy to the world until CHRIST comes again!

XXVII

THE GOODLY HERITAGE OF THE CHURCH*

"The lot is fallen unto me in a fair ground ; yea, I have a goodly heritage."—Ps. xvi. 7.

SOME ten years ago, in my East London days, I was taking a ten days' mission in a large parish, and, among many other interviews after one of the services, a working man who had been converted in connection with a neighbouring chapel asked to see me. It appeared that he had been attending the first five nights of the mission, and had, by God's grace, been impressed by the sermons on death, judgment, sin, and forgiveness, with which naturally the mission opened. After expressing surprise that what he called "the Gospel" was preached in our pulpits, and having discussed many interesting points with me, he leant forward and asked, with engaging frankness, in a confidential whisper, "Are you happy in the Church of England, Mr. Ingram?"

* Preached at the opening of the Church Congress at Weymouth, October, 1905.

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What lay in his honest but not very carefully instructed mind was apparently this: Could anyone who believed in mission work, who in the open-air or mission services or workshops tried to preach the Gospel to the poor, and who used extempore prayer, be happy in a Church which valued a historic ministry, which venerated sacraments, and which employed in its worship the stately and balanced petitions in the Book of Common Prayer? Now, what he, from his point of view, felt and expressed about the Church of England I find felt, if not always expressed, from many other points of view to-day. Time was when a Church Congress was in danger of becoming a mutual admiration society, when statistics were complacently unrolled about the number of communicants and the churches which had been built during the past ten or twenty years, and when references to our "incomparable Liturgy" adorned the speeches of many speakers. The danger is the reverse to-day. We are reminded at every turn of the defects of the Church to which we belong: the Prayer-Book, we are told, is not quite "catholic," and must be supplemented largely from other sources, or, it is said, from another point of view, to teach "rank sacerdotalism"; "we want more elasticity," we are told, "in the Church"; "we are divided at every point into hostile camps"; "we are financially on an unsound basis"; "we busy ourselves about

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ritual to the exclusion of great moral issues"; "we cannot combine even on the education question"; "when it comes to common action we are miserably weak compared to bodies half our size." "That's just like the Church of England," I have heard a man say when something untoward happens; and yet that very man has been brought up and nurtured in it from his cradle, and, as a matter of fact, at the moment when he makes the remark is probably giving his life in its service.

You will not suppose for a moment that I am underrating the value of criticism, or denying that many of the criticisms I have quoted are substantially true, and of the two dangers undoubtedly the second is the less of the two. Anything is better than vapid self-complacency or indolent self-congratulation; but still, in days when criticism of the Church is the predominant note even among Churchmen, I do see a danger that loyalty, especially among the young, may die out of our midst, and that the sort of service which can only come from enthusiastic love may grow cold. "The love of many shall grow cold." Is that prophecy to be fulfilled to-day?

And therefore it is that I would start this Congress with the note of the same intense loyalty which the ancient Jew felt for the Church to which he belonged and for the country which he loved so well. As he looked round upon what some might have considered the barren hills of

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Palestine, and thought over the long history of his chosen race and the good hand of his GOD upon him, he cried aloud in love and gratitude : "The lot is fallen unto me in a fair ground : yea, I have a goodly heritage."

To answer, then, the question of my friend the working man, I *am* happy in the Church of England, in the first place, because I know it to be soundly and profoundly Catholic. If the Nag's Head fable has long been the scoff of historians, so also has the unguarded assertion that the delivery of the instruments formed the essence of an ordination, and therefore one of the most certain facts of history is that the ancient Church of England is a true branch of the Holy Catholic Church. Speaking, then, as a member of the Congress rather than as a Bishop, I am happy in the Church of England because in it I can look back through an unbroken history to the time of CHRIST Himself, and can rejoice in the validity of its Orders, and the security of its Sacraments, and the purity of its Creed. And therefore I put aside with decision the suggestion that, to be a Catholic, I must be in communion with the Bishop of Rome, and pray to be preserved from—what to me would be—the supreme disloyalty of denying my Orders, and repudiating the validity of the communions which have fed me from my boyhood until this day.

Then, when I take the Prayer-Book and study

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it with the help of such an excellent book as Mr. Frere's new edition, practically rewritten, of Procter's "History of the Prayer-Book" (I mention it because a study of it would help many of the lay people of the Church as well as the clergy), I find, of course, as one naturally would expect, certain points in the Prayer-Book which most unprejudiced minds would regret; it may fairly be considered, even by the most loyal Churchmen, a matter of regret that the long unbroken canon so familiar to the students of ancient liturgies, long before the influence of Rome became so predominant, should have been broken up into three separate prayers; that those old and beautiful breathings of benediction—you can scarcely call them prayers—over the faithful departed ("grant them eternal rest, and may everlasting light shine upon them") should have been so rigidly repressed; that the great rehearsal of our LORD's work in Redemption, Resurrection, and Ascension—still preserved in the Scottish Liturgy—should have been omitted from the Consecration Prayer. But as we read over the history of the convulsions through which the Prayer-Book lived, who can doubt that GOD's guiding hand was over His Church and her sacred Liturgy, and that Bucer's reforming zeal was held in check by a higher Power? What was too ruthlessly cut out in an earlier period, when some excuse must be made for the terrible abuses which necessitated the Reforma-

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tion, found its way back into the Prayer-Book through the Catholic instincts of the Caroline divines; and even the Black Rubric in its present form can never be quoted as denying—what I believe every faithful Evangelical really holds in his heart, however he may express it—the Real and Essential Presence of JESUS CHRIST in the Holy Communion!

And yet, while happy in the Church of England because it is profoundly Catholic, I find in it a freedom and a liberty which gives me no sense of bondage to a system. I am under authority; but, as Bishop Gore says so well in his “Mission of the Church,” it is the authority rather of a father than of a tyrant. I am bound, of course, by the rules of the divine society to which I belong; I am told, if I am a priest, to say my daily service twice a day; I have given me in the Prayer-Book the Collects, Epistles, and Gospels for each saint’s day, clearly marking out that I am, even if only a layman, to learn in church the lessons they contain, and receive, if possible, the Holy Communion. I recite at each service a Creed, and am bound by that Creed; it is a perpetual reminder of the principles and truths for which I fight. I am to keep Fridays and ember days and vigils as days of fasting or abstinence; but, on the other hand, the rules are few and simple. They all contain principles—the principle of joyful commemoration, the principle of regular waiting upon God, the principle of self-

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control; but so long as I am loyal to these few definite rules embodying principles, I am free to live my life "at home in my FATHER's house." I am to confess my sins to GOD by myself, or I may go to some discreet and learned minister and open my grief. I am not bound by a thousand ritual ceremonies in my worship. I must be reverent, but be reverent in my own way. I am told facts rather than given definitions. I am told the fact of our LORD's special presence in the Holy Communion; I am not asked to assent to impossible definitions as to how it is vouchsafed. And therefore it is the liberty of the Church of England—the freedom, the openness, the simplicity—which helps to make it so fair a ground in which our lot is cast, and which helps to constitute it what it is—a goodly heritage.

And, before I leave this point, for GOD's sake let nothing rob us of this freedom. It makes the blood run warm through our veins to hear in the Magna Charta of England the words "the Church of England shall be free"; but there is no good in the Church of England being free unless we ourselves keep our freedom in the Church of England. Like many others, I have on my holidays been breathing the mountain air of Scotland, and came back, as so many of us do, not only refreshed in body, but renovated in mind and spirit by contact with Nature, and, through Nature, with the GOD of Nature. GOD does not

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become a different GOD when we worship Him in church, and the Prayer-Book from first to last breathes the mountain air of healthy worship. But when one turns from such a book, and good devotional books which breathe the same spirit, to some books produced and even used to-day in the name of religion, it is like plunging from the mountains into the close atmosphere of a hot-house. Ritual directions unsanctioned by our Church regulate every detail of worship; an infinity of little trifling rules embarrass and disturb the conscience; the grand conception of being lifted up by the SPIRIT in the Holy Communion into the actual Presence of CHRIST, surrounded by His saints and angels, in His glory, is fettered, if not crippled, by ideas appropriate to a materialising and really uncatholic superstition.

Let us get back, my brethren, from the temptation of being wise "above what is written" to the reverent sobriety of statement, so true to Scripture and early Church teaching, which is characteristic of the Church of England; and while the license of neglected saints' days, ignored fasts, curtailed liturgies, becomes a thing of the past, let there at the same time be an end of mumbled prayers, long, unexplained pauses which only disturb devotion, and a fancy ritual as unspiritual as it is uncatholic.

But already, by implication, I have mentioned another characteristic which will ever stand out as

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a leading mark of our great Church, and that is its constant appeal not only to Scripture, but the whole of Scripture.

It was in a Church Congress sermon, nearly twenty years ago, that I heard Bishop Lightfoot say: "The Church of England holds her unbroken Orders in one hand and an open Bible in the other; and only under such a Church can Christendom be united." And, surely, when those brethren of the Nonconformist bodies, all of them sprung from the womb of the Church of England, do turn again—as did my friend the working man—to examine the witness of the mother Church, who kept the faith alive in England long before they were born, they will find her still in her daily service reading four passages a day of Holy Scripture, still pointing for every sentence of Creed she recites to the written Word—preserved, so we believe, on purpose to keep the sacred deposit from change or decay through lapse of time—and maintaining her record to be, in this sense, the most scriptural branch of the Church in the world.

And be sure of this, my brethren: we need this appeal to Scripture to keep us true to-day, both on the right hand and on the left. Take two points alone: What right has a man who believes that CHRIST once said, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained," to belittle His

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Orders, to be afraid of being called a priest, to join in the cry against his brethren of "sacerdotalism"? If we appeal to Scripture, we must appeal to the whole of Scripture, and it is clear that, as Dr. Moberly so well pointed out, while the whole body of the one High Priest is priestly, it is the LORD's will that that body should have organs through which to act, and that those organs are not other than those to whom the sacred call and great commission has come to be the priests of a priestly body.

And if this is true, on the one hand, of those who refuse to give the full force to a passage of Scripture whose teaching they dislike, what sort of chance has modern Mariolatry of standing an appeal to Scripture at all? Let us be honest, and admit that the Church of England since the Reformation has been often unfaithfully timid in giving the Blessed Virgin Mary that place of honour she must always hold in the ranks of the saints. In our calendar there are two festivals in her honour marked for special observance, and two others among the black-letter festivals; but in our popular teaching the dread of Rome has made us suicidal in our cold neglect, for it has led by reaction to that very Mariolatry against which Scripture protests.

But what ground is there in Scripture, or in any revealed truth, for attributing to the Blessed Virgin any sort of control over the Will of the

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Second Person of the Trinity? There is no prayer which grates upon the ear trained to scriptural teaching more than a prayer addressed sometimes in the Roman Church to the Blessed Virgin—"Now, show that thou art a mother." The very account of the occasion when she did on earth "show she was a mother," one would have thought, was preserved specially for the purpose of showing for ever how unscriptural is the basis for such a prayer.

We are not to think of the saints, it is true, as separated from us ; on the contrary, we say in the Church of England every day, "I believe in the communion of saints," and St. Augustine says, "The Church above loves and helps its pilgrim brothers"; but worship on earth must be based on revealed facts, and it is not a revealed fact that a cry to any saint or to the Virgin Mary ever reaches them at all. We are strictly in accordance with Scripture and the teaching of the best theology when we direct our worship solely to the HOLY TRINITY, for, thanks be to GOD, it is a revealed fact that "we have, through CHRIST, access by one SPIRIT to the FATHER." It is, then, the fearless appeal to Scripture, and the whole of Scripture, which is one of the glories of the Church of England.

Now, I will not dwell further upon the story of the past—the Church is so rooted in the nation's life that the story of the one is almost the story of

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the other—but I would rather put before you the thought of the glorious possibilities of the future. At the opening of Southwark Cathedral we took for our motto, “The kingdom of heaven is like unto a steward who brings out of his treasure things new and old,” and among the new things already beginning to be brought out of the treasure of the Church of England is, in the first place—

(a) Its missionary zeal. The fact that there are so few definitely missionary collects in the Prayer-Book is a witness to how low the flame of missionary enthusiasm has sometimes burnt. Even now in Melanesia the territory assigned to our Church to convert is the only territory not converted yet to CHRIST, and our own missions scarcely cover one-seventh of the mission-fields of Christendom; but, still, the zeal, the capacity for self-sacrifice, is there; we have got it in us. Already young and vigorous sons of the Church of England have gone forth to the ends of the earth, and the more we obey the order, “Go into all the world,” the more we shall inherit the promise made only to a missionary Church, “Lo! I am with you all the days, even to the end of the world.”

(b) In the second place, I would mention its elasticity at home. Undoubtedly the Prayer-Book, meant to be a help, may be so used as to be a hindrance; but if some simple explanation is given of the lessons read, if the Psalms are sung to simple chants, if popular hymns are used, if many of the prayers

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are read, and not intoned, I have seen a congregation entirely poor in East London joining most heartily in a Prayer-Book service. "How I did hate the Psalms once!" said a young working man to me; "but now I love them." Nevertheless, if we want other forms of prayer, let us have them. I freely give leave in London for almost any experiment in mission work if it first be submitted for my sanction. Let us show we can hold the old faith and yet adapt it to new needs, and never be content until with the inventiveness of love we have by all means saved some.

(c) And, lastly, let us draw out of the treasure in our Church something only too little drawn out yet—a large-hearted toleration. I should have thought it must be clear to most thoughtful men that there always will be what may be called a Catholic and a Protestant interpretation of the Prayer-Book, and that there always will be High Churchmen and Evangelicals in the Church of England. This is a fundamental fact in the situation which we must accept. There have been some suggestions publicly made lately by men I deeply respect for altering or removing or authoritatively interpreting that bone of contention in the Church, "the Ornaments Rubric," and, of course, if the matter does come before Convocation I shall take my humble part in framing any necessary canon. But I should greatly fear that what happened thirty years ago would happen

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again. When letters of business, so I read in Archbishop Tait's "Life," had been actually received from the Crown to enable Convocation to deal with the question, after three years' acrimonious discussion it was decided to do nothing, and the attempt had stirred up the very bitterness which it was intended to allay.

Now, what I would suggest to the Church at large is this: to attempt to alter nothing in its formulas or rubrics, but to draw out of the heart of the Church that large-hearted tolerance with one another which shall enable us to live and work together. If once we grasp and admit that there are these two renderings which can conscientiously be given to the message of the Church of England, while the substance of that message remains the same, all ground of bitterness would be taken away.

Do we realise even yet the waste of energy involved by that party spirit? Is anything more humiliating than reading the long wrangle of forty years, part of which is recorded at length in that most interesting "Life" to which I have referred? There must be, of course, a clear and distinct line, beyond which toleration cannot go, and if the authorities of the Church have no power to keep that line, their authority must be strengthened. I have prosecuted, and I should prosecute again, Mariolatry in the public services, or that use of the sacred elements unauthorised by our Church

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known as the service of Benediction. I have prosecuted, and should prosecute again, a disorderly Protestantism which disturbs services which it dislikes. But the great mass of the subjects which produce friction do not touch the essentials of the faith at all, and come within the field of toleration between the two extremes. What they require for their treatment is a large-hearted sympathy on behalf of the pastor, lest, "if he overdrive the flock one day, all the flock will die"; large-hearted sympathy of one parish priest with another, glad that that other should win his people by a ceremonial which he could not use himself; and large-hearted sympathy of both with the rulers of the Church, who, in difficult days, have but one desire—to lead on the Church they love to its best and develop to the full its glorious heritage.

And, in advocating such a policy, I will fortify myself with some voices, which all will reverence, from the past. I do not quote them for a moment as approving any special application of the principle of large-hearted tolerance, but having been driven by their wide outlook over the whole field of observation and their long experience to see that a large-hearted policy was the only possible and right one. The first voice is that of one whose name will ever be honoured in the Church, Dean Church, who with other signatories sent a memorial to Archbishop Tait, in which these words occur :

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“ . . . Having regard to the uncertainties which have been widely thought to surround some recent interpretations of ecclesiastical law, as well as to the equitable claims of congregations placed in the most dissimilar religious circumstances, we cannot but think that the recognised toleration of even wide diversities of ceremonial is alone consistent with the interests of true religion and the well-being of the English Church at the present time.

“The immediate need of our Church is, in our opinion, a tolerant recognition of divergent ritual practice; but we feel bound to submit to your Grace that our present troubles are likely to recur, unless the courts by which ecclesiastical causes are decided, in the first instance and on appeal, can be so constructed as to secure the conscientious obedience of clergymen who believe the constitution of the Church of CHRIST to be of Divine appointment, and who protest against the State's encroachment upon rights assured to the Church of England by solemn Acts of Parliament.”*

The next is an extract from a letter of the late Lord Salisbury to the same Archbishop, written on February 5, 1881:

“I believe that the course it ought to take would be to recognise very clearly the distinction between old-established places of worship and

* “Life of Archbishop Tait,” vol. ii., p. 424.

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those which, having been built recently, belong rather to the congregation which has been formed in them than to the inhabitants of the district to which (in order to satisfy the law) they have been nominally assigned. In these 'congregational' churches, when the congregation and the incumbent are agreed, I think the Bishops would do wisely to shield the incumbent from litigation—at least, if he did not go further than to act upon the apparently literal interpretation of the Ornaments Rubric.

"If this were accorded and announced, I do not believe that the incumbents of the older churches would attempt similar practices in opposition to the feelings of their parishioners. The few who did so would be mere eccentrics, and would not be supported.

"Ritualism is too strong to be 'put down'; a serious attempt to do so would simply shatter the Church."*

And my last quotation is from Archbishop Tait himself, who at the end of his long life, and after years which, but for his courage and personal piety, would have been embittered by the ceaseless conflict over this very question, wrote as follows :

"I have now been twenty-four years a Bishop, and during that period I have been brought into contact with persons of all grades of opinion in

* "Life of Archbishop Tait," vol. ii., p. 448.

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the Church of God. The lesson I have derived from this contact has been to respect deeply the opinions of those who are not afraid to act according to the dictates of their consciences. I believe all of them, as they become more conscientious, will be tolerant of difference of opinion ; and if I may single out any one characteristic of the Church of England which seems to indicate it as the Church of a great and world-extending nation, it is this: that it is wide enough to embrace within its sympathies all the various shades of opinion which the different schools of the Church contain.

“Had any one school of thought so prevailed as to drive all others out of the Church, it would have been an evil day for the Church and the nation. Looking abroad, I do not see this liberty in any other country or Church but our own ; on the contrary, what one sees elsewhere is that men are driving each other forth because of their differences in religious sentiment. I thank God that I belong to a Church and a nation which understands what is catholicity in its true sense, and embraces in one fold good men who desire to promote their Master's cause, even though in many points they differ very widely from each other.”*

Or, to go behind all these to one whom they would all have acknowledged as greater than any of them, St. Paul. “By love serve one another,”

* “Life of Archbishop Tait,” p. 489.

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he cries, "for all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another" (Gal. v. 13-15).

But, freed from the bitterness of party spirit, there is no fear for the future of our Church ; it is a fair ground, it is a goodly heritage.

Children, then, of a grand mother, sons and daughters of the Catholic, free, Scriptural, and historic Church of England, enter more and more—that is my message—upon your goodly heritage. We have a great past, but we have, I believe, a yet greater future, founded upon the rock of truth. No new knowledge can wreck us and no new discovery confound us. With a strength as yet unspent and resources of energy on which we have never yet fully drawn, we front the future. May we be found at our great work when CHRIST comes again !

XXVIII

FEEDING THE MULTITUDE*

"One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said unto Him, There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes : but what are they among so many? And Jesus said, Make the men sit down."—
ST. JOHN vi. 8-10.

IT so often happens that when we come to some great and glorious occasion in our Church life we have not to look very far for our message. Over and over again we find our message in the teaching of the Church for the week. And if I had had to search the whole Bible to find a message really appropriate for you happy people of St. Andrew's, on this most great and glorious day in your Church life, I could not have found any passage which more explains what has happened here, or more inspires us to go on, than the Gospel for this week, from which the text is taken. In the first place, these disciples of old were face

* Preached on St. Andrew's Day, 1905, at the festival service of St. Andrew's, Willesden, after its twenty-five years of work under the Rev. T. A. Rawlins.

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to face with the very thing with which we are face to face to-day, and that is, a great multitude which had to be fed. I ask you what other sight is it that concerns me more closely as Bishop of London every day than these forty thousand fresh people who pour into London every year, and have, somehow or other, to be spiritually fed? What was the task, what was the problem, which has confronted your devoted Vicar for these last five-and-twenty years but this : how was he to keep pace with the population as it poured into the parish more and more year after year? how was he to feed the multitude? And, if the problem was precisely the same, so again were the sort of things which people said : "Send them away : why did they come here at all? Let them buy food for themselves. What are these among so many? Five barley loaves and a few small fishes! The thing is impossible ; it cannot be done." And we hear, do we not, my friends, exactly the same voices to-day : "Try something else ; try social reform by itself ; try something which is not spiritual ; the spiritual effort has failed." The suggestions are the same. Even St. Andrew, who made the right suggestion—your own St. Andrew—only half believed in it when he suggested the one thing which was the way finally out of the difficulty. He suggested the use of the loaves and of the fishes, but he said, "What are these among so many?" And so, again, the slenderness of the

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supply is precisely the same to-day as it was of old. I venture to say that during these twenty-five years many a time have your Vicar, and those men he gathered round him, and the women who helped him all through, found their hearts fail them. "How shall we get the stipend of another assistant curate? How shall we get this part of the church finished? How shall we get the parish hall?" One thing succeeds another, and they have looked round half in despair when they have seen how little they had got. It seemed almost incredible that the amount could come and that they could master their task. I look myself at the twenty-eight thousand pounds a year for the Bishop of London's fund and I say, "What is this among so many?" with ten churches to build every year!

And, therefore, because of the difficulties and the problems and the sort of suggestions that we have to face, we turn to see what was the secret of the miracle of old. First, the splendid confidence and calmness of JESUS CHRIST Himself. There He stood in the midst of it all. He Himself knew what He would do. He was quite calm and confident. And if I wanted a proof to convince some unbeliever that JESUS CHRIST was alive to-day I should not merely muster all the evidence for the resurrection. I should have to convince him of that, of course: we have to use our minds as well as our hearts; but I should not argue the point on the question of philosophy or science. I should simply bring him to a work like this,

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which was begun in a bare cabbage garden twenty-five years ago, with not a soul to help, and no church, and no mission-hall. And I should say, "Who was it that produced what we see here now?" And I venture to say that the man who on earth has had most to do with it—and I shall have another chance to-night* of saying what I think of him—that man would be the first to say, "It was not I. Some higher Person was at work here, Someone who from the beginning knew what He would do, and He has done it." This is the Christian evidence which no man can deny, that the LORD works with us and confirms the word with signs following.

And then, again, the condition which the LORD demanded of old He demands to-day. He could not have done this work if His disciples had kept their loaves to themselves. St. Andrew was quite right. "There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves and a few small fishes"; but he did not know that the miracle was waiting until the lad brought them out. And the really beautiful thing to me as I think over in imagination, and picture the past work, is the amount of quiet, gentle, and unobtrusive self-sacrifice which this work really means among the people. I am speaking no doubt to some who have seen the whole twenty-five years. Do you remember how tired you must have sometimes got of the collecting-boxes and the collecting-

* A great parochial entertainment was to be held after the service.

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cards, and perhaps of the constant appeals? And yet over and over again out of your poverty, some of you out of your weekly wage, you brought out this loaf and that loaf, and said, "Take it, Master, take it, take it; it is a little thing." And the great loving hands took it and blessed and broke it, and it went round the multitude, and then another effort was taken by the same loving Hand, and over and over again, as you brought your loaves and your fishes, they sufficed for the multitude.

And so our first note is a note of most genuine and joyous thanksgiving. "Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but to Thy name be the praise." That must be the genuine utterance of every believing heart. It was well, then, to-night that we should begin at the church for the commemoration, and send up our hearts in joyful gratitude to the LORD who knew what He would do, and has done it.

We have been gathered in, we have been welded into the body of the Church, now in this way and now in that way, perhaps some of us out of a prejudice against the Church, some out of open unbelief, and the next question is, "What does He expect us to do now?" We have gathered, it is true, first for thanksgiving; but, after all, we have gathered also to plan the next advance. And, therefore, we turn to consider one or two things which JESUS CHRIST said to the disciples whom He had gathered in, and had trained and had taught and had confirmed, as it were, and had as His inner circle.

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The first thing was, "On this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." On this rock. You know there are some people who imagine that the Church is not in the Bible. I should recommend them to read very carefully the New Testament over again, and ask themselves this question: Why it was that our LORD, who might have preached many more sermons to the multitude, who might have healed many more people, if He had spent His time in that way, why He spent so much of His time in gathering together His disciples up into the mountain and into the valley, and teaching and training them there, and why it was that in one of His rare expressions of joy He said when they had been gathered in and taught, "Now, on this rock I can build My Church." It can only be for the one great reason that His greatest work on earth was to found and start His Church, to last through all time, and that therefore if He said of old, "On this rock I will build My Church," He says the same to-day as He looks down on such a congregation as this. What, then, does JESUS CHRIST expect of you, the rock? How steadfast you have to be! You cannot build anything upon a foundation that is always quivering, or changing, or giving way. Do you realize that the Church here for the future is to be built on such a congregation as this, and on the other congregations that worship in the other churches

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in this district? Do you realise that the hope of converting this great parish is entirely based upon you? Then, how firm you ought to be, how steadfast—how steadfast the witness that you men have to bear up in the office, or the warehouse, or the bank! That is the time to test what you owe to your Church. When other people around you are talking loosely about this thing or that, you are the one, if you are the rock, to say “I will not have that language, or those stories told before the boys; I will not listen to it myself.” So, again, while sceptical suggestions are made, and perhaps someone is laughing at the old faith, you are the men to say, “I believe in the old faith of Christendom, and I will stand by it.” And you women and girls, although perhaps your witness may not have to be so much by word, how steady you have to be when others fall away! When some around say to you, “Oh, it is so tiresome to go to church on a Sunday,” you are not to be carried away with every wind of doctrine. If you are the rock, you are to be the steady ones who will not let yourselves be led away either from the old faith or from the old church worship, because, if *you* fail, CHRIST is wounded in the house of His friends.

And therefore let the first resolution of every man and woman, boy and girl connected with this church be this: “I will be steady, I will not fail JESUS CHRIST; He is trusting to me. When He

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puts His hand down to see if I, over whom He has taken so much trouble, am standing firm, I will be found firm, faithful even among the faithless.

“Faith of our fathers, living still,
I will be true to thee till death.”

And then, secondly, if CHRIST is trusting us like this, and is going to build us up like this, how compact we ought to be! What Church feeling! No jealousy between Church workers, no gossip carried round, spoiling the harmony of a parish, no bickering between this one or that. You have received the Holy Communion together, most of you, and when we receive the one bread we should become one bread. And therefore the second note of this church must be compactness, unity, a spirit of love ever passing from one to the other; you must be a compact body which shall make all those who watch the Church life of this place say, “See how these Christians, see how these Church people, love one another.”

And then, thirdly, notice what JESUS CHRIST trusted His disciples to do. He gave the food to the disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. He did not give it direct Himself, but He used the ministry of the disciples. And if there is one truth which ought to be revived in the Church more than another, it is the priesthood of the laity. People still imagine there is some kind of different standard of holiness required of a clergyman than of a layman. I defy you to find it in any page of

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the Bible, or in any part of the teaching of the Church. There is one High Priest, JESUS CHRIST; but the Church is the body of the High Priest, and therefore the Church is priestly, is holy. "Ye are all a holy priesthood, a peculiar people." The body of the whole Church is sacerdotal. We priests are the organs of that body. But while there is a difference of function between a clergyman and a layman, you find no difference laid down in Holy Scripture with regard to the standard of their lives or the thoroughness of their consecration.

And therefore I want my last word to you to be this: Are you discharging the priesthood of the laity? are you living up in this church to the consecrated lives which you ought to live? You who have received the falling of the HOLY GHOST in Confirmation, and thereby been sealed with the seal of the LORD, and received your lay ordination to exercise these lay priestly gifts in your work, are you living up to the privilege you have received? You who have received the Holy Communion, are you bringing others to the same spiritual food? I wonder whether I am speaking to some who, while they enjoy the services in their beautiful church, are doing very little for others. Are there any children you might teach in the Sunday-school? I have asked privately no question about this parish on purpose, but I know many parishes where there is a terrible dearth of

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men teachers. It is a sacrifice to give up a Sunday afternoon after a hard week's work, but anyone who believes he is taking part in the great miracle of the world should be only too thankful to do it if he can. Are there no brothers near, neighbours next door, whom a call might bring to church? Are there none up in the warehouse or the office or the bank who might be influenced for good by someone here? Are there no young mothers in your district, my sister, who need the elder sister's word of warning or word of encouragement? We must be missionaries if we are to live up to what CHRIST expects of us. He has brought us in, He has fed us, He has trained us, He has blessed us; but He expects us to bless others; He gives us the food, and we have to take it to the multitude.

And so I leave you first the lesson of St. Andrew's thankfulness. Imagine what he must have felt on the evening of the day when the five loaves and the few fishes which he had pointed out and helped to give away were used for so glorious a miracle. St. Andrew's thankfulness first and then St. Andrew's faithfulness—faithful unto death, he inherited the crown of life! And if in that thankful, faithful spirit, you will take up the new twenty-five years' work, that opens up to-night, then there will be thousands here who through your ministry and your work and your faithfulness, will say of JESUS CHRIST: "This is indeed that prophet who should come into the world."

XXIX

THE INCARNATION—GOD'S ANSWER TO THE DOUBTS OF HIS CHILDREN*

“God so loved the world.”—ST. JOHN iii. 16.

IT is not easy, for many reasons, always to believe that God loves us or to feel any love for God. In the first place, we have never seen God. We can see a father or mother who, perhaps, sits next to us in this Abbey; we see the little child that nestles up against us, and it is not difficult to love that child. But we have never seen God. “No man has seen God at any time.” Then, again, it is impossible for us to love anyone but a person; and are we so sure—so our spirits ask in times of darkness and doubt—are we so sure that God is a person? When we hear from one thinker that “life is playing chess with an invisible opponent who never makes or passes over a mistake,” we clearly cannot love such a person as that. But can we love “a power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness”? I think not. If

* Preached in Westminster Abbey on the third Sunday after Epiphany, 1906.

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we imagine that God is only a force or a power, we cannot love Him at all. All are driven, the more they think of it, to realise that there must be a God. A box of letters cannot throw themselves into a play of Shakespeare, nor can the atoms of the universe throw themselves into the pageant we see on a starry night. But is God only a force behind Nature? If so, we cannot love that force. Or, again, how hard it is to realise that God can give up anything! A schoolboy knows that his parents are very often pinching themselves and denying themselves to send him to school. A child sees his father getting gray before his time, as he works to keep his home together. These are obviously giving up something. The mother who sits up night after night trying to save her child is giving up something; and it is easy to believe in their love; but can God give up anything?

Again, think of the suffering in the world and the pain. Some of us have been praying all through this week for the life of a little boy of ten, that his life might be spared. But he died yesterday, and he lies dead in his home this morning. Why was he allowed to die? A gracious lady,* known and loved by so many here, is called away, as it seems to us, before her time; and we ask why all this pain and suffering and loss is allowed. "I can never love God," said someone to me within the last few days, "because for

* Lady Bridge.

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thirteen months I saw my husband live a life of prolonged agony. I would not torture anyone like that ; I cannot love God."

A steamboat goes down with hundreds on board ; earthquakes sweep away thousands from the earth ; someone dies in London every eight minutes day and night. It is only those who know the secrets of human souls who know what an obstacle the pain and suffering and death of the world are to a belief in the love of God.

Now, the Epiphany is God's answer to the doubts of His children. He is not angry because we question and think over these things, and use the intellect and mind He has given us. He knows whereof we are made: "He remembereth that we are but dust." The first thing which we notice in the answer is the complete surprise of it. We know at Christmas-time how parents often prepare some surprise for their children. They think over what they can get to surprise them, and then, when they have decided on something, they say: "They will never think of this—it will be a complete surprise to them." And if we may reverently use such an analogy, the Epiphany gift is God's surprise for His children.

Some of us have been watching within the course of the last month or two a beautiful Christmas mystery play called "Eagerheart." I am thankful to think that that play, which moved some of us at the West End of London to tears,

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has been since then performed in the heart of East London, and, please God, has brought home the message of Christmas through the eye to thousands who perhaps would never accept it through the ear. When Eagerheart had prepared her dwelling for the coming of the King on that wonderful night when He was expected to pass through her town, there came to her door a poor tired woodman and his wife and little child. They begged to be taken in, but poor Eagerheart had the lamp and the food and the couch prepared for someone else. "Not to-night; any night but to-night," she answered. "But everyone says that; wherever we go, that is the answer," replied the woodman. After a struggle with herself the little generous soul gives up her dream. "My dream! my foolish dream!" she exclaims. "Come in and rest in my home." She goes out with the lamp to try to meet the King. Outside she meets the shepherds and the three kings, looking also for the King of kings. And when, led by the Christmas star, she comes round again to her own little humble dwelling, she says: "No, sirs, it is impossible; this is my humble home." When they persisted and said that the King must be here, the door was thrown open at last, and there, in a blaze of light, were the woodman and his wife and child transformed; there were the infant CHRIST and Mary and Joseph in *her* home. What a surprise! God save us, my friends, from being so Gospel-

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hardened that we lose the wonder of Epiphany and Christmas! GOD save us from coming Sunday after Sunday to some service, and by the mere repetition of the words losing the glorious wonder of the Epiphany. It was GOD's surprise, GOD's secret, that He had kept hidden from the foundation of the world. It was the mystery, the thing that had been a secret, but which was now revealed, and it ought to fill us with awe and wonder. We might have pictured that GOD would come as a general, or a king, or a philosopher, but never as a babe lying in a manger.

Then, secondly, notice what a full-faced answer it was to all the doubts of GOD's children. Did we say that we had never seen GOD? St. John gives us the answer: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life—Him declare we unto you." It is no fairy story, no fable. And those—probably only those—who have made some study of the history of the New Testament realise how historically we touch JESUS CHRIST to-day. It is only those, or chiefly those, who know nothing of modern criticism who are afraid of it. Those who have studied every line of it and helped many of us to face and solve some of the difficulties around the New Testament—it is these men who know how we touch to-day the infant CHRIST. Or, again, did

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we ask for a person? We have a person, and *such a person*! Is it not wonderful that JESUS CHRIST is to-day still the ideal of the world? Was it not John Stuart Mill who said: "If anyone wants to translate virtue from the abstract into the concrete, he cannot take a better rule than to live so that JESUS CHRIST would approve his life"? It is not only a man like that who claims JESUS CHRIST as the ideal of the world. Ask those working men whose power is becoming more and more manifest every day what they think of JESUS CHRIST. I have lived for years among them, and I know that they criticise church and chapel on the ground that they do not represent faithfully or adequately JESUS CHRIST; but Him they honour, Him they admire, even if only at present they appreciate His human character; and He remains to-day, after all these centuries, the ideal of the world. "Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing; behold, the world is gone after Him!"

Did we ask whether God could give up anything, our text answers back: "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son."

Could JESUS CHRIST give up anything? "Being in the form of God, He thought it not a thing to be snatched at to be equal with God, but made Him of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant." "Though He was rich, He became poor for our sakes." Give up anything! He gave up everything!

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We may be puzzled at the suffering and the pain of the world. But, then, let us remember that at Christmas was born the Prince of sufferers, that He came into the thick of the world, and bore the worst. Yes, you who are mourning to-day, you who are suffering pain and darkness and loss, if you are tempted to think God does not love you, or does not love those whom He has taken from you, then remember that over and over again concerning the Prince of sufferers the verdict of God rang clear, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." At the Epiphany, then, the heart of heaven lies open, and during these Sundays we are bidden to gaze and gaze on the sight.

But the real question we must ask ourselves before this season passes away is: "What response are we making, or are prepared to make, to the love of God?"

There was a book written not many years ago of which the title was: "The Christian Life: A Response."* It was a beautiful title, which put the Christian life in the true attitude—it should not be lived out of fear of hell, not lived to purchase heaven, but rather as a response to the love of God. What sort of response are we expected to make to the love of God?

First, clearly the response of worship. The shepherds were quite right when they said: "O

* By Father Congreve.

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come let us adore Him!" The angels were right when they sang: "Glory to God in the highest!" So we should come to this or some other house of God, and simply worship, bow the head in adoring worship if we believe at all.

Secondly, there should be the response of progressive purification of character. "Look straight into the light, and you will always have the shadows behind." Yes, but more than that, you will see more clearly how to walk. Look straight into the light, the Epiphany light, and every year you will see more things that you must do, and more clearly the things you must avoid. "He that hath this hope purifieth himself more and more, even as CHRIST is pure." Are there not things which we see more clearly than formerly that we must avoid? Are there no duties, up to now undone, which we must do in the light of Epiphany before the year closes?

Thirdly, there should be the response of public spirit instead of private interest. How ignoble politics may become if the political life is lived for private interest, or for mere party cries! What a magnificent field of service if this is the response to the love of God! "My Parliamentary life: a response," is a resolution for every newly-elected member of Parliament.

And, lastly, there is the response of service. If He came down from heaven, and so loved the world, we must find a way in which to love our

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fellow-men as He loved us. We are helping to bear by our alms to-day the sorrows of the poor, but this is not enough. We have a city of poor in London, and we must find a way by which we may imitate Him who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor. And those who are poor in our city, whether poor in money, or poor in joy, or poor in faith, are a field of service for the Christian life as a response. Indeed, there is only one answer to "God so loved the world"—God so loved me—then *so* will I love God; with a like sacrifice, with a like abandonment, with a like perseverance, a like devotion.

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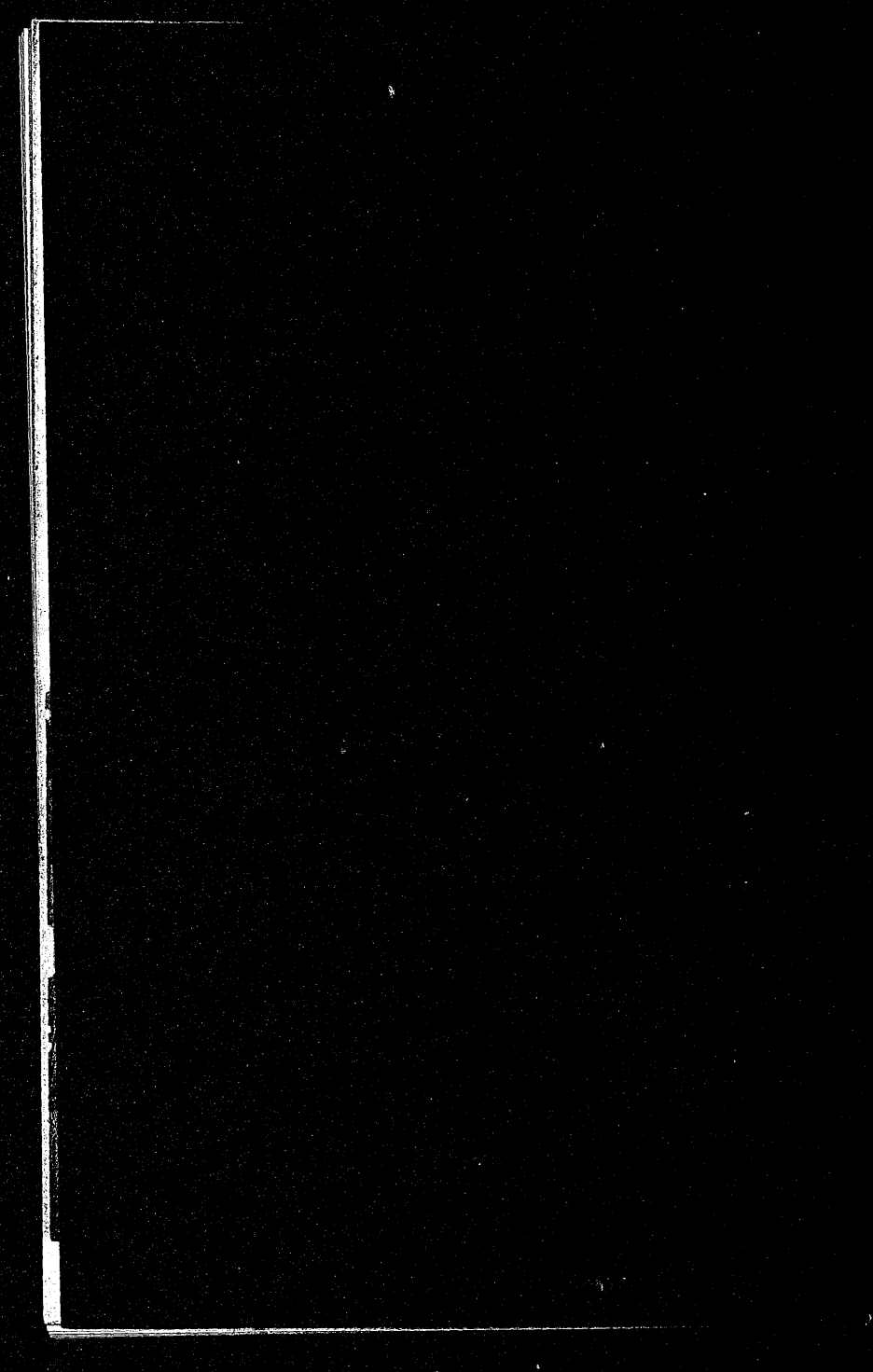
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